

**The Hidden Depths of Popular Fiction.**  
**A Study of Two Female Writers of Wilhelmine Germany 1890-1914.**

**Submitted by Sabrina Stolfi to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of  
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The Hidden Depths of Popular Fiction.  
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This investigation presents two literary case studies that demonstrate the heterogeneity of Wilhelmine popular fiction, both in terms of thematic orientation and aesthetic quality. The chosen authors are women from bourgeois backgrounds who were prolific and well-known during their life-time, but who have since been relegated. They target the 'new middle class' of that era as their readership and, respectively, represent two important but contested genres of late nineteenth-century popular fiction: *Heimatkunst* and the *Sozialroman*. *Heimatkunst* has been dismissed as a homogeneous propagator of right-wing ideology. Yet the texts of Charlotte Niese evidence 'resistant practice' within and against prevailing discourse parameters. Her autobiographical writing demonstrates a type of nationalism orientated in dignity and independence, rather than competition and militarism, while also showing how political indoctrination and imposition poisoned the vernacular social status quo which otherwise managed to integrate antagonistic values and attitudes. Her fictional narratives highlight how writing dubbed *Heimatkunst* was subject to hybridisation, at times to amount to an approximation of a modernist aesthetic. The *Sozialroman* has been dismissed as a trivial 'variety of social recipes'. Luise Westkirch's narratives, however, incorporate thorough-going social reform. Her shorter narratives include astute, psychologically-based social critique which facilitates insights into contemporaneous preoccupations and slow perceptual changes. Incorporating tenets derived from the German romantic legacy, her narratives challenge dominant discourse parameters directly. In the process, the internationally ubiquitous interpretation of competition and power as basic instinctual drives is deconstructed as an erroneous and self-destructive assumption. Westkirch's complex narratives establish sub-textual agendas through 'thematic compounding' that directs the reader's attention overtly at one set of issues while covertly commenting on another. In this way, she constructs gender inequality as an indictment of normative socio-political systems. This study therefore argues that popular fiction located in a time of cultural crisis has the potential to make explicit the parameters of the prevailing dominant discourse, against which specific values are articulated. Since a conscious formulation of these parameters is essential to the loosening of any conceptual hegemony, which depends on implicitness, fiction thus situated can yield new perspectives, not only in terms of historical insight, but in terms of conceptual alternatives that also have contemporary relevance.

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## Introduction

### *Why Late Nineteenth-Century Popular Fiction? A Rationale and Approach*

The popular fiction that was read – avidly – in late nineteenth-century Germany has tended to be treated as a plethora of narratives the import of which is either trivial or ideologically suspect. On the other hand, certain texts, whether by classical authors, such as Goethe and Schiller, by poetic realists, such as Wilhelm Raabe, Theodor Fontane and Theodor Storm, or by modernists, such as Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, Heinrich Mann and Hermann Hesse, which encompass only a fraction of the prose fiction that was sought after at that time,<sup>1</sup> have received sustained critical appraisal. Yet the received picture of an acknowledged, fixed set of ‘worthwhile authors’ is neither an adequate reflection of the tensions and potentials of Wilhelmine society, nor of the literary variety and scope that made up the literary market at that time. A consequence of negative projections that are levelled perhaps too wholesale at the popular fiction of this era is that the material becomes difficult to approach: the pre-conceived impression that it is not going to be worth reading, except perhaps for sociological purposes, needs first to be overcome. This is the starting point of this study. It sets out to evaluate a selection of prose fiction texts by minor authors, which were published between 1890 and 1914. The investigation will encompass a dual interest: that of the relationship of these narratives to their concurrent (and precedent) socio-historic and socio-political contexts on the one hand, and of their literary stature on the other.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Alberto Martino. “Die Leihbibliothek im Zeitalter des Massenbuchmarkts (1849-1914)”, in: *Die deutsche Leihbibliothek. Geschichte einer literarischen Institution (1756-1914)*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1990, pp. 289-546. – Alberto Martino’s comprehensive study provides a picture of a vibrant and heterogenous late nineteenth-century literary market, which will be referred to in more detail subsequently.

Recent historians like Volker Ullrich highlight the challenge of interpreting the Wilhelmine epoch in terms of a necessity to maintain a balance between “eine [...] auf das Jahr 1933 fixierte Perspektive” and an understanding of the “Vielfalt und Widersprüchlichkeit der Epoche”, to arrive at a more realistic appreciation of the *Kaiserreich* as dynamic and open-ended:

Keine Beschäftigung mit dem deutschen Kaiserreich [...] kommt also darum herum, die widerspruchsvolle Verbindung von Beharrung und Modernität, von Rückständigkeit und Fortschritt zu thematisieren. Eine ausschließlich auf das Jahr 1933 fixierte Perspektive würde der verblüffenden Vielfalt und Widersprüchlichkeit der Epoche nicht gerecht. Neben den besonderen Belastungen ist auch nach den verschütteten Möglichkeiten, den entwicklungsfähigen Momenten zu fragen. Der Untergang des Kaiserreichs war durch die Gründungskonstellation von 1870/71 so wenig determiniert wie das Scheitern der Weimarer Demokratie durch die halbe Revolution von 1918/19.<sup>2</sup>

The idea of “entwicklungsfähigen Momenten” and “verschütteten Möglichkeiten” contained in fictional material will be a particular interest in this study. Wilhelmine society was patriarchal, but it was also subject to “umwälzender Modernisierung der Industrie, Wirtschaft, Technik, des Verkehrs- und Kommunikationswesens sowie der Entwicklung neuer Formen wissenschaftlichen Erkennens”.<sup>3</sup> Authors writing at this time inevitably express a double crisis of relationship and identity, which Gisela Brinker-Gabler terms

[eine] Krise des Verhältnisses zu den Institutionen, die den ‘Individuen’ nicht mehr einen beziehungsvollen Bedeutungszusammenhang vermitteln, und Krise der Selbstkonzeption selbst. Im politischen und kulturellen Leben zeigen sich Neuerungs- und Fluchtbestrebungen: neue Wirklichkeiten werden entworfen, Orientierung an alten Ordnungen wird gesucht, es vollzieht sich eine ‘Umwertung der Werte’ wie die Aufwertung alter Werte.<sup>4</sup>

The epistemological shifts she refers to were the most difficult to negotiate, since they conditioned attitudes to outward developments, such as technological advances and social changes. Unavoidably affected by these shifts, some writers responded by affirming the kind of ‘relativism’ declared by advocates of mechanistic-evolutionary assumptions – naturalist writers are a particular example of this approach. Others

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<sup>2</sup> Volker Ullrich. “Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?” in: [www.zeit.de/zeit-geschichte/2010/04/Das-Essay/](http://www.zeit.de/zeit-geschichte/2010/04/Das-Essay/) Accessed 30 Jan 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Gisela Brinker-Gabler. “Zwischen Tradition und Moderne. Literatur, Publizistik und Wertwandel im frühen 20. Jahrhundert”, in: Gisela Brinker-Gabler (ed.). *Deutsche Literatur von Frauen*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 1988, p. 169.

<sup>4</sup> Brinker-Gabler, “Zwischen Tradition und Moderne”, p. 169.

disputed a positivistic conception of the world, either wholly or in part – this seems to be among the characteristics of many lesser known writers in Germany at that time.<sup>5</sup> Still other authors deliberately turned away from the discourse plethora of the time, to adopt a pensive stance of renunciation. Moritz Baßler attributes such an attitude to poetic realist writers such as Wilhelm Raabe, who has a protagonist say in *Alte Nester*:

warten, warten muß man – heute wie morgen – auf das, was mit einem geschieht:  
in das Glück kann sich kein Mensch unterwegs retten, so fallen die Besten und  
Edelsten in die Entsagung, um nicht dem Verdruß zu verfallen.<sup>6</sup>

Literary responses of this period can be seen as negotiations that reflect, in one way or another, the profound perceptual challenges of this era. The texts that are here of particular interest are those which attempt an articulation of, or form a conscious relationship to, these challenges. Popular fiction is therefore taken not only to mean the bestseller that enjoyed enormous but ephemeral vogue<sup>7</sup> – rather, this study is motivated by a more introverted orientation. Its central interest can be described as “das innere Bild einer Epoche”.<sup>8</sup>

In order to limit the scope of the enquiry, I will adopt, firstly, a demographic approach. The diversity of Wilhelmine society was due not least to a major new societal stratum that had emerged over the nineteenth century, a so-called new middle class of educated people who worked in widely divergent professions. Economically dependent, they were nevertheless disidentified from the proletariat and psychologically aligned

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<sup>5</sup> An obvious high-profile international parallel of this type of response is Charles Dickens, who satirised excessively rational assumptions about reality, for instance in his novel *Hard Times*. (Cf. Charles Dickens. *Hard Times*. London: Chapman & Hall, [1854].)

<sup>6</sup> Moritz Baßler. “Figurationen der Entsagung”, in: Dirk Götsche/Ulf-Michael Schneider (eds.) *Jahrbuch der Raabe-Gesellschaft* 2010. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2010, p. 80.

<sup>7</sup> A recent study about nineteenth-century popular fiction in Germany takes this as its main reference point. (Cf. Charlotte Woodford/Benedict Schofield. *The German Bestseller in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Rochester: Camden House, 2012.)

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Mann, quoted in: Roger Hillman. *Zeitroman. The Novel and Society in Germany 1830-1900*. Frankfurt/New York et.al.: Peter Lang, 1983, p. 13. – The term introverted is here taken in its depth-psychological sense, the meanings of which will be explored more fully later. Hillman’s comparison of well-known nineteenth- and early twentieth-century *Zeitroman* exponents provides a useful initial indication of its meanings in respect of prose fiction. Compared to Mann’s aim, “Immermann and Spielhagen did not attempt such an inner picture in their novels, but remained at the outer level of their eras. [...] H. Mann’s *Im Schlaraffenland* is concerned in its satire with an outer reality and only through distorting this makes an implied negative comment of an inner reality. Fontane alone, so much admired by T. Mann, blended the inner picture of an era with one of its exterior.” (Hillman, *Zeitroman*, pp. 13-4.)



with the *Bürgertum*.<sup>9</sup> When Alberto Martino refers to a “Leserevolution” in respect of this epoch, he attributes it particularly to the “Entstehung einer großen Zahl von Angestellten, einer sozialen Gruppe, die seit je ein nahes Verhältnis zum Lesen und Schreiben gehabt hat.”<sup>10</sup> The new middle class – not only the employees themselves, but also their families – thus was a major reading public for authors, publishers and periodicals. I have honed the approach of this study further by opting to examine texts written specifically by women for this demographic. Unlike more radical, feministically inclined authors, who have received critical attention, these mainstream, bourgeois writers form a particularly under-researched field. Lastly, in order to achieve the necessary focus, a limited number of detailed case studies have been preferred over a wider survey encompassing several writers, which would have had to omit subtleties and subtextual agendas that potentially provide key insights into the texts. The sections that follow will expand on the socio-historic and literary contexts that have been alluded to so far, and aim to exemplify the framework of this study.

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<sup>9</sup> The terms *Bürgertum* and its equivalent, the bourgeoisie, are generic labels which are used in this study for the identification of a societal stratum that has historically been the counterpoint of the aristocracy, while being entirely disidentified from all lower strata of labourers. As industrialisation progressed in Germany, however, the *Bürgertum* split into what was perceived to be an old, established section distinguished by its moral virtues, refinement and culture, termed the *Bildungsbürgertum*, and a new section whose orientation in business earned it the label *Wirtschaftsbürgertum*, or *Besitzbürgertum*. How the new middle class modelled itself on one or the other, or both, will be a question this study asks. An additional, potentially confusing factor which is important to note is that the terms “middle class” and “middle classes” have been used to discuss the German *Bürgertum* in English literary and cultural studies (cf. for instance, Ernest Bramsted. *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes in Germany. Social Types in German literature 1830-1900*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967). The resultant terminological interchangeability becomes problematic when major societal upheavals, which occurred as industrialisation progressed, are taken into account. While these upheavals will be discussed in more detail later, Volker Ullrich’s overview of the social strata of mid to late nineteenth-century Germany aids an initial clarification of terms. He refers to the *Bildungsbürgertum*, the *Wirtschaftsbürgertum* and a *Kleinbürgertum* of artisans as well as of *Angestellte*, to acknowledge both an old, increasingly beleaguered part and a burgeoning new sector as the components of the *Kleinbürgertum*. (Cf. Volker Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht 1871-1914. Aufstieg und Untergang des deutschen Kaiserreichs*. Frankfurt: Fischer, 2010, pp. 290-97.) In my study, the plural term “middle classes” indicates a very generic demographic, which encompasses all four tiers. The term “new middle class”, on the other hand, refers specifically to *Angestellte* as a societal phenomenon.

<sup>10</sup> Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 294.

## The Development of a New Middle Class: A Sketch

A brief overview of the emergence of *Angestellte* as sizeable, and from 1871 as national demographic, will be useful at the outset. Studies that accept the “Geburtsjahr” of the stratum as being “zwischen 1890 und 1910”<sup>11</sup> can be contrasted with Gustav Schmoller’s observation:

Von 1850 bis zur Gegenwart [...] haben andere Gruppen des Mittelstandes sehr zugenommen: das höhere Verwaltungspersonal der Unternehmungen und die liberalen Berufe; ein Teil der besser bezahlten Arbeiter (Werkmeister usw.) bilden einen neuen Mittelstand.”<sup>12</sup>

Access to earlier demographic development is difficult due to the rather sketchy nature of available statistics. A comparison of Günther Schulz’s and Manfred Dittrich’s studies of *Angestellte*, however, may serve to outline this development, partly due to points of concurrence that exist between them, and partly because Dittrich extrapolates feasible estimates for the mid nineteenth century. Schulz holds that figures for *Angestellte* in the mid nineteenth century are “unsicher, unter anderem deshalb, weil die Reichsstatistik anfangs Beamte und Angestellte nicht getrennt auswies und die Verkäufer und Werkmeister bei den Arbeitern subsumierte.”<sup>13</sup> The overall trend, however, taken from 1882, is indisputable:

1882 arbeiteten in Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Bergbau und Industrie, Handel und Verkehr (doch ohne Handlungsgehilfen und Verkäufer etc. in Handel und Verkehr) 307 268 Angestellte (1,9% der dort hauptberuflich Erwerbstätigen), 1907 waren es in den drei Bereichen [...] 1 290 728 Angestellte (5,2% der entsprechenden hauptberuflich Erwerbstätigen) und 1925 3 834 888 (13,6%). 1933 gab es in

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<sup>11</sup> Marion Heister. *Winzige Katastrophen. Eine Untersuchung zur Schreibweise von Angestelltenromanen*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989, p. 43.

<sup>12</sup> Gustav Schmoller. “Was verstehen wir unter dem Mittelstande? Hat er im 19. Jahrhundert zu- oder abgenommen?”, in: *Die Verhandlungen des Achten Evangelisch-Sozialen Kongresses, abgehalten zu Leipzig am 10. und 11. Juni 1897. Nach den stenographischen Protokollen*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1897, p. 133. – Schmoller uses the term “neuer Mittelstand” simply to describe a new demographic development. His observation provides a noteworthy counterpoint to the accounts of retrospective writers, who identify the use of political manipulation to condition the self-perception of those belonging to this stratum. Evidently, an already existent notion of the new middle class was being appropriated, rather than invented, for political purposes. For a more detailed discussion of the term, cf. p. 22.

<sup>13</sup> Schulz, *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*, p. 6.

Deutschland insgesamt [...] 4 032 345 Angestellte (12,5% aller Erwerbspersonen).<sup>14</sup>

Only the year 1933 here shows a clear indication of checked growth, undoubtedly due to the global economic crisis that occurred at that time. Dittrich, in his earlier study, includes conjectural figures for earlier phases of demographic development, based on statistics available for “Handelsgehilfen”<sup>15</sup> in Prussia, the group left out by Schulz:

Die Handelsgehilfen im Sinne der sich kapitalistisch orientierenden Wirtschaft wurden in Preußen seit 1849 statistisch erfaßt. Ihre Zahl vermehrte sich in der [...] Periode der wirtschaftlichen Aufwärtsbewegung von 1850 bis 1870 fortgesetzt. Im Jahre 1862 wurden 46,7 T. männliche Gehilfen gezählt (*Jahrbuch für die amtliche Statistik des Preussischen Staats*, Berlin 1867, 2. Jahrgang, S. 249). Da die Bevölkerung Preußens damals ungefähr die Hälfte der Bevölkerung der 1871 zum Deutschen Reich vereinigten Länder betrug, so kann die Zahl der Handlungsgehilfen für das spätere Reichsgebiet im Jahre 1862 auf knapp 100 T. geschätzt werden. [...] im Jahre der Reichsgründung werden in Deutschland etwa 120 bis 130 T Handlungsgehilfen vorhanden gewesen sein, da ihre Zahl im Rahmen der Berufszählung von 1882 auf rund 185 T. zu schätzen ist.<sup>16</sup>

Zur Zeit der Reichsgründung kann [...] die Zahl der Angestellten in Deutschland auf eine drittel Million geschätzt werden. [...] Ihre Zahl betrug 1882 rund eine halbe Million, 1895 knapp 1 Million, 1907 rund 1,9 Millionen, 1925 rund 3,8 Millionen und 1933 knapp 4 Millionen.<sup>17</sup>

Schulz and Dittrich’s respective figures for 1925 and 1933 tally, while numbers given for 1882 complement each other. Schulz excludes “Handlungsgehilfen” except for the year 1933, while Dittrich provides figures only for this group for the years 1862 and 1882, using these to extrapolate figures for 1871. For 1882, Dittrich’s figures of 185,000 “Handlungsgehilfen”, and 500,000 *Angestellte* for the whole of Germany, match Schulz’s figure of 307,268 for *Angestellte* excluding “Handlungsgehilfen”. For 1907, the difference between Schulz and Dittrich’s figures posits the existence of some 600,000 employees in the missing category, a – feasible – additional 415,000, compared to 1882. For 1925, a discrepancy appears *because* the respective figures

<sup>14</sup> Schulz, *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*, p. 6.

<sup>15</sup> A concerted attempt at the formalisation of the term *Angestellter* did not occur until the implementation of the *Angestelltenversicherung* (AVG) in 1911 (cf. for instance, Kocka, *Die Angestellten*, p. 140). Schulz summarises how legal codification was fraught due to the heterogeneity of the stratum: “Tatsächlich gelangte das AVG von 1911 nicht zu einer systematischen Definition des Angestellten. Es behalt sich mit einer Auflistung der Angestelltenthätigkeiten.” (Schulz, *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*, p. 4.) The historically older, synonymous terms “Handelsgehilfe” and “Handlungsgehilfe” are referred to by Dittrich, while Schulz’s comments in respect of early statistics demonstrate an early instance of the long-standing semantic interchangeability of “Beamter” and commercial white-collar employee. In his chapter entitled “Begriffsgeschichte”, Kocka shows the latter form of terminological obfuscation as being in evidence until at least 1880. (Cf. Kocka, *Die Angestellten*, pp. 116 – 141, esp. 121-2, 126-7.)

<sup>16</sup> Manfred Dittrich. *Die Entstehung der Angestelltenschaft in Deutschland*. Stuttgart/Berlin: Kohlhammer, 1939, p. 102.

<sup>17</sup> Dittrich, *Die Entstehung der Angestelltenschaft*, p. 103.

coincide, since Schulz still appears to exclude “Handlungsgehilfen”, whereas for 1933, he clearly states the use of an *encompassing* statistical figure – here, again, respective figures tally. Despite this point of uncertainty, Dittrich’s overall figures may be taken as realistic, rather than exuberant, or possibly manipulated,<sup>18</sup> estimates. His estimates for dates prior to 1882 are therefore of equal interest – according to these, *Angestellte* were already existing as a burgeoning stratum by 1862, one which was subject to both rapid and sustained growth.

In view of the statistics outlined, the position forwarded, for instance, by Marion Heister in respect of the ‘birth year’ of this demographic needs to be reassessed. Locating its beginnings as late as 1890 means on the one hand to equate the stratum with the first instances of organised agitation, at which different vocationally-based associations cooperated,<sup>19</sup> and, on the other, to identify a social phenomenon with a specific label – a process by which the *actual* historical existence of the phenomenon is denied by excluding precedent definitions. Such a position rests on the idea and use of the trans-vocational term *Angestellter*, as highlighted by Jürgen Kocka:

Der Durchsetzung des Angestelltenbegriffs im industriellen Unternehmen lief etwa seit 1890 die Einbürgerung von ‘Angestellten’ als Sammelbezeichnung für Arbeitnehmer aus verschiedenen Wirtschaftszweigen parallel. So vertrat der ‘Deutscher Privat-Beamten-Verein’ 1891 in einer Petition zur Steuergesetzgebung das Interesse der Staatsbürger, *die gegen festes Entgelt mit einem geringen oder mittleren Einkommen als Angestellte Privater in den verschiedensten Berufsarten und Erwerbszweigen tätig sind*. Wie zunächst nur innerhalb der Betriebe, so deutete der Gebrauch von ‘Angestellter’ nun auch gesamtgesellschaftlich darauf

<sup>18</sup> While consulting Dittrich’s study, undue bias was deemed a possibility in view of its publication date of 1939, a time when heavy censorship of research was imposed and integral to publication, since the NSDAP required the placement of party officers as editors in publishing houses. A case in point is Hans Speier’s study of *Angestellte*, publication of which was blocked as early as 1933 due to its socio-political content. This content included the unfavourable presentation of the right-wing *Angestellten*-association DHV, which Speier criticises for its anti-Semitism, which had originally been implemented to “compete with Social Democratic ideas”. (Cf. Hans Speier. *German White-Collar Workers and the Rise of Hitler*. London/New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986, p. 122.) – Two letters written to Speier in 1933 by Theodor Geiger, the original editor of the Ferdinand Enke publishing house, are appended to the post-war edition of his study. They outline the enforced practice of employing and endowing NSDAP officials with executive powers in publishing houses to ensure that material critical of the regime did not achieve publication. Further, they show how editors attempting to publish material deemed unsuitable, in this case Geiger, were summarily dismissed. (Cf. Speier, *German White-Collar Workers*, pp. 163-7.) In respect of Dittrich’s quantitative figures for demographic growth, which were compared with other researchers’ findings as well as with those of Schulz, however, bias was ruled out.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. for instance Jürgen Kocka. “The First World War and the ‘Mittelstand’: German Artisans and White-Collar Workers”, in: *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Jan. 1973), p. 103.

hin, daß die 'Stellung' des Arbeitnehmers in bestimmten Zusammenhängen bedeutsamer wurde als seine Berufszugehörigkeit."<sup>20</sup>

As highlighted previously, however, the term *Angestellter* had not achieved universal recognition by 1910, let alone by 1890, while "Industrialisierung, der Ausbau des Verkehrsnetzes, die Expansion des Handels, und Gründungen von Banken und Versicherungen" were of course also underway long before 1890. To set the "Geburtsjahr" around this time is therefore arbitrary, yet has specific consequences for assumptions about 'their' fiction.

### The Appearance of Angestellte in Prose Fiction and the Angestelltenroman

A particular reason for the relatively detailed exposition of the development of the new middle class stratum is that suppositions about demographic origin inevitably condition assumptions about the concept *Angestelltenroman*. Thus Heister, along with several other researchers, takes Robert Walser's autobiographical novel *Der Gehülfe*<sup>21</sup> as the relatively late starting point for fiction deemed in some way relevant to, or representative of, modern *Angestellte*. She asserts:

Im Unterschied zum alten Kontor, wie es Gustav Freytag in *Soll und Haben* mehr erklärt als beschreibt, ist im modernen Handelsbetrieb die Arbeit streng geteilt und spezialisiert [...]. In dieser Zeit erscheint eine Reihe von Romanen, die das Leben der Angestellten zumindest am Rande beschreiben... 1908 erscheint "Der Gehülfe" von Robert Walser, nicht der erste Angestelltenroman überhaupt, aber der erste von literarischer Bedeutung.<sup>22</sup>

The implicit comparison between Freytag's and Walser's texts in the light of representative modern white-collar business practice is puzzling, since *Der Gehülfe*<sup>23</sup> does not feature a working environment that is "streng geteilt und spezialisiert", there being only a single *Angestellter* who acts as general assistant to an – ultimately

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<sup>20</sup> Kocka, *Die Angestellten*, p. 126.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Robert Walser. *Der Gehülfe*. Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1908.

<sup>22</sup> Marion Heister. *Winzige Katastrophen. Eine Untersuchung zur Schreibweise von Angestelltenromanen*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989, pp. 43-5.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Robert Walser. *Der Gehülfe. Roman*. Berlin: Cassirer, 1908.

unsuccessful – inventor at the latter's home. In this capacity, moreover, he becomes emotionally attached to the family and performs tasks at the employer's wife's behest, a circumstance reminiscent of the earliest, feudal-connoted, texts concerned with *Angestellte* that were located during investigative research undertaken for the present study. More importantly, however, Heister's basis is problematic in both literary-historical and literary-critical terms. Gustav Freytag's *Soll und Haben*<sup>24</sup> is here taken as antiquated predecessor or historical genesis of the *Angestelltenroman*, which apparently evidences no further worthwhile examples for fifty-three years, until 1908. Although novels featuring *Angestellte* peripherally are acknowledged as existing in the interim period, they are described as "eine Reihe von Romanen",<sup>25</sup> to underline their non-descript status.<sup>26</sup> No specific reference is made to texts deemed deserving of dismissal, the whole body of relevant literature instead being rejected out of hand. The concept of a realist sub-generic category, known as *Angestelltenroman*, has been consolidated through twentieth-century studies that see 'the fiction of this stratum' as being defined by the socio-historic conditions of the Weimar Republic, as well as those of the BRD. These studies do not focus on the earlier existence of *Angestellte* in relation to what constitutes 'their fiction', and further, tend to interpret this earlier history in terms of precursorship to the Weimar Republic, to imply that earlier *Angestellte* are either not of sufficient interest, or not relevant. Deborah Smail, for instance, acknowledges the white-collar milieu of the *Kaiserreich* briefly:

Although rationalization had already started before the war, *Angestellten* had generally enjoyed a high profile in Wilhelmine Germany, either as *Beamten* or administrators in small and middle sized companies or skilled foremen. But the dramatic increase in the size of (new) industries over the war combined with the introduction of new machine technology and more efficient production methods saw extensive changes to the role of the *Angestellten*. [...] Much of the work carried out by commercial clerks and office employees became mechanized through new machinery [...].<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Gustav Freytag. *Soll und Haben*. Leipzig: Fikent, [1855].

<sup>25</sup> Heister, *Winzige Katastrophen*, p. 44.

<sup>26</sup> Conversely, *Angestelltenromane per se* are here implied to have appeared additionally to texts with peripheral depictions of *Angestellte*, but are reckoned not to be valuable, compared to *Der Gehülfe*.

<sup>27</sup> Deborah Smail. *White-collar Workers, Mass Culture and Neue Sachlichkeit in Weimar Berlin. A Reading of Hans Fallada's Kleiner Mann – Was nun?, Erich Kästner's Fabian and Irmgard Keun's Das kunstseidene Mädchen*. Frankfurt/New York et al: Peter Lang, 1999, p. 41.

*Angestellte* in the *Kaiserreich* are here identified in terms of emergent business rationalisation processes, to highlight changes ensuing with the First World War, which ultimately led to alienating work contexts characteristic of the twentieth century. Christa Jordan's study of the prose fiction of *Angestellte* similarly focuses on the late Weimar Republic and in this respect evidences the same bias.<sup>28</sup> She provides a brief history of the stratum, which generally avoids mention of dates<sup>29</sup> in respect of "Vorläufer der modernen Angestellten".<sup>30</sup> She highlights that

für die Ideologiebildung des Angestellten sind [die] ständisch-zünftlerischen Traditionen bedeutsam, 'überlieferte Vorstellungen aus jener Zeit halten ihn auch heute noch im Lager der Bourgeoisie fest. Der Angestellte soll nach wie vor den Eindruck behalten, als übe er einen bürgerlichen Beruf aus, und er soll deshalb die Klassengemeinschaft mit der Arbeiterschaft verneinen'.<sup>31</sup>

*Angestellte* have therefore, it seems, become largely identified as a twentieth-century phenomenon with nineteenth-century psychological 'baggage'.<sup>32</sup> Jordan's overview that the status of late nineteenth-century *Angestellte* was "durch Bildung qualifiziert", and that they "gehörte[n] eindeutig zum Bürgertum", further that "persönliche und übersichtliche Autoritätsverhältnisse regelten die patriarchalischen Beziehungen zwischen Prinzipal und Angestellten",<sup>33</sup> however, is too much of a generalisation to function as a convincing dismissal: patriarchal "Beziehungen", rather than being "übersichtlich", actually constitute power relations. As a recurrent characteristic of patriarchal relationship-formation, these relations are worthy of attention, not least

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Christa Jordan. *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung. Die Angestellten in der Erzählprosa am Ende der Weimarer Republik*. Frankfurt/New York et al: Peter Lang, 1988.

<sup>29</sup> Jordan, *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, pp. 22-8. An exception occurs in Jordan's critical references to Werner Deich's study, which features a "Veröffentlichungszeitraum der untersuchten Werke zwischen 1890 und 1914" as a criterion for exclusion from her study. (Cf. Werner Deich. *Der Angestellte im Roman. Zur Sozialgeschichte des Handlungsgehilfen um 1900*. Berlin/Cologne: Grote, 1974.) – The time-span of works examined by Deich is actually 1882-1914.

<sup>30</sup> Jordan, *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, p. 22. – In respect of the interpretation of historical precursorship, it should be noted that Jordan does not constellate the Weimar Republic itself simplistically as forerunner to fascism. Rather, she identifies a "Kaleidoscop von sich überkreuzenden Tendenzen, Ausdrucksformen, Interessen", which is reflected in "den bürgerlichen und linksbürgerlichen, in den 'linken', sozialistischen oder sozialromantischen, wie in den wertkonservativen bis reaktionären Angestelltenromanen und -erzählungen" of this time. (Cf. Jordan, *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, p. 310.)

<sup>31</sup> Jordan etc., *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, p. 22.

<sup>32</sup> Schulz posits that contemporary *Angestellte* evince only a vestige of previous status perceptions: "Heute ist die Vorstellung von einer Exklusivität der Angestellten verschwunden. Die Unterschiede zwischen Arbeitern und Angestellten im Arbeits- und Sozialversicherungsrecht sowie bei der Entlohnung sind fast vollständig eingeebnet." (Schulz, *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*, p. 3.)

<sup>33</sup> Jordan, *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, p. 22.

because of the phenomenon of psychological longevity: Siegfried Braun highlights that the notion of “Stand”<sup>34</sup> continued to exist in an affective sense into and beyond the late nineteenth century. Culturally inherited power-invested relations are likely to be beset with psychological tensions, which constitutes a potential component of fiction that thematises nineteenth-century *Angestellte*. Jordan further describes the white-collar milieu of the *Kaiserreich* as being characterised by a “hierarchische Bürokratie [which] verleiht der Kapitalherrschaft einen mittelbaren Charakter, verschleiert Ursprünge von Macht und Autorität”,<sup>35</sup> while Helmut Steiner posits the idea of a “weithin anonyme, allein von den Gegebenheiten der Produktionsstruktur bestimmte Angestelltenhierarchie”.<sup>36</sup> Conditions such as these are among situations worth examining examples of nineteenth-century fiction for.

#### Prose Fiction as History: Methodological Considerations

The issue here is not to provide further information about an era that continues to be viewed simply as a predecessor to that which inevitably followed but rather, to adopt a more complex stance. It is noteworthy that the already outlined balanced interpretive stance forwarded by Ullrich emerged out of prior debates involving the capacity of literary texts to act as historical documents, a question which also concerns this enquiry, due to its partially historical perspective. In the German academic context, Heinrich Mann’s novel *Der Untertan*<sup>37</sup> had been used by Hans-Ullrich Wehler in the 1970s to iterate the idea that a direct link between the *Kaiserreich* and the rise of fascism exists. The basis for the assertion was Mann’s observation – and portrayal in narrative form – of a collective attitude disproportionately invested in patterns of

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Siegfried Braun. *Zur Soziologie der Angestellten*. Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1964, p. 87.

<sup>35</sup> Jordan, *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, p. 23.

<sup>36</sup> Helmut Steiner. *Soziale Strukturveränderungen im modernen Kapitalismus. Zur Klassenanalyse der Angestellten in Westdeutschland*. Berlin: Dietz, 1967, p. 58.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Heinrich Mann. *Der Untertan*. Leipzig: K. Wolff, 1918. – For a more detailed exposition of the novel’s publication history, cf. “Social Transformation in Ein moderner Märtyrer”, p. 241.



authority and subordination. Gesa von Essen notes the controversy in the 1970s between Wehler and Thomas Nipperdey:

Als Hans-Ulrich Wehler [...] 1973 seine großangelegte Studie *Das deutsche Kaiserreich* vorlegte, nahm er dabei ausdrücklich auf Heinrich Mann Bezug, da, so Wehler, 'kein Historiker' das ideologisch-mentale Szenarium der wilhelminischen Zeit 'je so eindringlich beschreiben [könne], wie das Heinrich Mann im *Untertan* getan' habe. Nipperdey dagegen warf in seiner Replik – zugespitzt unter der programmatischen Leitfrage *War die wilhelminische Gesellschaft eine Untertanengesellschaft?* – sowohl Wehler als auch Mann vor, ein irreführendes, klischeehaftes Schwarz-Weiß-Bild gezeichnet zu haben, das eine 'Teilwahrheit' zur 'ganzen Wahrheit' verabsolutiere, notwendige Differenzierungen und ausgewogene Urteilsbildungen aber vermissen lasse.<sup>38</sup>

While the psychological phenomenology identified by Mann deserves to be taken seriously, an acceptance of this novel as a deterministic socio-historical document capable of pinpointing cause and effect is problematic. The debate about the capacity of literary fiction to provide specific socio-historical information was rekindled in the 1970s, having been actively pursued – including about the fiction of *Angestellte* – during the Weimar Republic. Bernhard von Brentano acerbically observes that “der Schriftsteller muß wissen, was gespielt wird, oder er weiß nichts, und wenn er nichts weiß, kann er auch nichts schreiben”.<sup>40</sup> The point of reciprocity between literary text and society is particularly stressed by Josef Witsch, who cites examples of narratives known to have provided impetus for political agitation in nineteenth-century America, England and Germany.<sup>41</sup> He proposes “aktive[] Dichtung”<sup>42</sup> as an alternative, contextually-related aesthetic – a position perhaps unavoidable in the last years of the Republic.<sup>43</sup> Witsch cites the practice of censorship as proof of the efficacy of fiction to function as a political tool:

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<sup>38</sup> Wehler and Nipperdey, quoted in “Heinrich Mann, *Der Untertan* (1916)”, unpublished lecture given by Dr Gesa von Essen [Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, 2008, p. 1], transcript kindly provided by Gesa von Essen.

<sup>40</sup> Bernhard von Brentano. *Kapitalismus und die Schöne Literatur*. Berlin: Rowohlt, 1930, p. xx.

<sup>41</sup> Witsch cites Harriet Beecher-Stowe and Upton Sinclair as American examples while the effect of Charles Dickens' fiction is mentioned in terms of its effect on Victorian English society. The German precedent is Martin Lampel, whose *Jungen in Not* and *Revolte im Erziehungshaus* are said to have caused “öffentliche Diskussion” that were continuing at the time of writing, as well as having prompted numerous court cases against “Fürsorger und Leiter von Fürsorgeanstalten.” (Josef Witsch. *Berufs- und Lebensschicksale weiblicher Angestellter in der Schönen Literatur*. Cologne: Verlag des Forschungsinstituts für Sozialwissenschaften, 1932, pp. 6-7.

<sup>42</sup> Witsch, *Berufs- und Lebensschicksale*, p. 9.

<sup>43</sup> Urs Jaeggi, for instance, took up this debate in 1973, to provide a potential counterpoint to dichotomising debates concerning “Schöne Literatur” and “Trivilliteratur”. (Urs Jaeggi, quoted in: Peter Stein.

Wie man versucht, die Wirkung der Sozialkritik durch die "Schöne Literatur" zu unterbinden, wenn sie bestimmten Interessengruppen gefährlich wird, zeigt sich in dem Versuch, den Verlag der weiteren Werke [Upton] Sinclairs [...] unmöglich zu machen, wie überhaupt in aller Zensurierung der 'Schönen Literatur', der durchaus nicht nur 'Schmutz und Schund' zum Opfer fällt, wenn man auch beliebt, die Verbote unter dieser 'Maske' auszusprechen.<sup>44</sup>

In the 1970s, viewpoints ranged from that of Werner Deich's, which supposed that fiction can be consulted to confirm specific, historical facts about a social group in corroboration of quantitatively derived sociological or historical data, so long as these facts are recognisable across a series of prose fiction texts,<sup>45</sup> to that of Walter Schiffels, who, akin to Wehler, asserts that socially critical texts "können [...] zur Innovation historischer Kenntnis beitragen, weil sie zur Zeit ihrer Erstpublikation zu politisch engagiertem Handeln motivieren wollten".<sup>46</sup> However, the undoubted reciprocity between historical context and prose fiction is in my study not taken as substantiation for the practice "einzelne[] Romane auf die [...] Aufzählung von sozialwissenschaftlich oder historisch gesicherter Realitätspartikel abzufragen."<sup>47</sup> From this point of view, I coincide methodologically with Jordan:

Ideologiekritik sucht den Wahrheitsgehalt vergangener Objektivationen 'nicht aus der Konfrontation von Werkzitat und Realitätsfragment entspringen zu lassen, sondern sucht ihn aus der Totalität des Werks zu konstruieren.' Das 'Wie' ihrer

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"Einleitung: Die Theorie der Politischen Dichtung in der bürgerlichen Literaturwissenschaft", in: Peter Stein (ed.) *Theorie der politischen Dichtung*. Munich: Nymphenburger Verlag, 1973, pp. 41f.)

<sup>44</sup> Witsch, *Berufs- und Lebensschicksale*, p. 7.

<sup>45</sup> The modified focus of both Bramsted and Deich corresponds to the "so-called renaissance of the qualitative approach starting in the 1960s, understood as a kind of a return of repressed qualities", which posits the importance of socio-cultural contextualisation and thereby resists the "quantitative imperative" (Gordana Jovanovic. "Toward a social history of qualitative research", in: *History of the Human Sciences*. Vol. 24, No. 2 (April 2011), p. 1.), demonstrated also in Deich's aim "nachzuweisen, daß Angestellte kein vergessener Faktor in Romanen der Jahrhundertwende sind, und [...] möglichst ausführlich das Material vorzustellen, aus dem sich ein Erscheinungsbild des Angestellten in Romanen nachzeichnen lässt." (Cf. Deich, *Der Angestellte im Roman*, p. 15). Deich's study does not, however, follow the revisionary impetus to its conclusion, which on the one hand means recognising "a priority of subject matter over method", and on the other, to acknowledge the subjectivity of research paradigms themselves. Thus the "quantitative imperative" is itself derived from socio-historical factors including "modern individualism, monological rationality [...] mechanics as the first science, quantification as a technology of distanced objectivity and a search for certainty realized at the expense of qualitative attributes." Jovanovic uses "anthropogenetic and sociogenetic reconstructions as well as a microgenetic analysis of the research process [to] demonstrate that choices of subject matter and of methodology are socially and culturally embedded and necessarily linked to broader interests and beliefs." (Jovanovic, "Toward a social history of qualitative research," pp. 15-6.)

<sup>46</sup> Walter Schiffels, "Formen historischen Erzählens in den zwanziger Jahren", in: Wolfgang Rothe (ed.) *Die deutsche Literatur in der Weimarer Republik*. Stuttgart: Reclam, 1974, p. 197.

<sup>47</sup> Jordan, *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, p. 14. – This assertion is particularly aimed at Deich, whose study Jordan deems "als Grundlage ungeeignet." (Jordan, *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, p. 19.) While her methodological objections largely apply also to this study, the historicity of Deich's study, as also its – general and therefore limited – potential sociological value should not be dismissed. For the present purpose, it was also useful for the identification of potential source materials.

Darstellung ist zu untersuchen – darin liegt ihr literarischer und oft auch erst ihr kritischer Charakter.<sup>48</sup>

The problems attending Deich's concretising approach to prose fiction texts may be readily illustrated by example. For instance, referring to Fritz Anders's novel *Doktor Duttmüller und sein Freund*,<sup>49</sup> Deich sets out to provide information about attitudes to *Angestellten* at the turn of century, to investigate whether commercial positions were perceived as either socially elevating or degrading:

Felix Wandrer, der Sohn eines verstorbenen Gymnasialprofessors, wird 'Kaufmann', d.h. Büroangestellter, weil er auf dem Gymnasium versagt und abgehen muß. Seine Mutter kann es nur schwer verwinden daß ihr Sohn nicht studieren kann, denn sie hatte es von Jugend her auch nicht anders gewußt, als daß der gebildete Mensch erst mit dem studierten Manne anfange. Und nun erlebte sie, daß ihr eigener Sohn in die unteren Regionen hinabsank.<sup>50</sup>

In the larger context of the narrative, however, the narrator actually presents the idea that ignorance and inhumanity reside behind the rigid rules and excessively formalised procedures of a prestigious educational institution. Felix Wandrer, an unusually bright student, is able to perceive this fallacy and seeks to expose his professor's tyrannical and petty-minded disposition by introducing a deliberate mistake into a Latin test, just to see "was der Alte für ein Gesicht machen würde."<sup>51</sup> This is the act that ultimately causes his expulsion from the school. Rather than simply presenting social degradation through educational failure, the novel establishes a critical commentary about the inflated public status of a type of academic institution, in which inadequate practitioners display distorted values, self-indulgence and cruelty, and which places procedure over the actual reality of specific situations. Thus the narrative makes the deeper point that *Bildungsbürger* status, appropriated from learning in these circumstances does not constitute dignity, unlike the alternatives that arise when the traditional institution proves to be an unviable option. If this novel can be deemed to portray the collective attitudes Deich investigates, it therefore does so transformatively. His literal reading in this case consists of a misunderstanding of thematic content.

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<sup>48</sup> Peter Bürger, quoted in: Jordan, *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, p. 14.

<sup>49</sup> Fritz Anders, *Doktor Duttmüller und sein Freund. Eine Geschichte aus der Gegenwart*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1902, p.17.

<sup>50</sup> *Die Angestellten im Roman*, p. 39.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Anders, *Doktor Duttmüller*, p. 4.

The hypothesis formulated by Peter Bürger, that the “Gehalt des Kunstwerks ist wesentlich durch die Form konstituiert”<sup>52</sup> is tentatively accepted in this study, with “Gehalt”, being all but synonymous with quality. It may be added that a literary reading prioritises *meaning*, which is necessarily derived from an interplay of factors, while marginalised material can be of crucial significance, destabilising overt or intended meanings, potentially to reverse more superficially derived value judgements. Information here is possible, albeit not in a decontextualised sense. According to Meinrad Pichler’s analysis of Ödön Horváth’s fiction,<sup>53</sup> one notable historiographical function of literature is to outline “soziale, psychische und moralische Depravierungserscheinungen”,<sup>54</sup> an attribute which, arguably, applies to all socio-historic contexts evidencing stark social inequalities. One can go further, and assert that it is a specific capacity of literary prose fiction texts to comment on psychological states, or inner realities, such as value-systems and priorities, which potentially predispose to concordant action, as Wehler implies. They can therefore draw attention to factors easily missed, for instance, by sociological methodologies orientated in quantitative data. The concern highlighted by Nipperdey, however, is also a valid one: literary focus on internality and affective specificity stresses *potentialities* and *tendencies*, rather than *actualities*. Authors may, additionally, create exaggeration to accentuate and shape a specific psychological observation. Deterministic interpretations are therefore inappropriate. They are problematic also in the sense that “entwicklungsfähige Momente”, rather than being perceived as such, come to be obscured by the retrospective interpreter, to be treated as though they had been negligible in stature, rather than only in status. The implied conclusion of such an interpretative stance is that ultimately, dominant collective movements, which are

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<sup>52</sup> Peter Bürger. “Benjamins ‘rettende Kritik’. Vorüberlegungen zum Entwurf einer kritischen Hermeneutik”, in: *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift. New Series*. Vol. 23 (1973), p. 204.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. for instance, Ödön Horváth. *Der ewige Spießker*. Berlin: Propyläen, 1930. – This narrative may be termed a psychological dissection of the overly adaptive mentality of commercial *Angestellte* in Southern Germany and Austria during the Third Reich.

<sup>54</sup> Meinrad Pichler, “Von Aufsteigern und Deklassierten. Ödön von Horvaths literarische Analyse des Kleinbürgertums und ihr Verhältnis zu den Aussagen der historischen Sozialwissenschaften”, in: Traugott Krischke (ed.) *Ödön von Horváth*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981, p. 67.

potentially politically engineered, are the only phenomena worthy of attention.

Unsurprisingly, such a position is not accepted in this study.

### Three Notable Epochs in the History of the New Middle Class

During the research phase concerned with the emergence and development of the new middle class, three periods became particularly apparent as potential focal points for the study, namely, the early phase of the stratum's development during the Industrial Revolution from approximately 1850-70, Wilhelmine society from 1890 to 1914 as a phase of intense cultural tensions and contradictions, and the Weimar Republic, from 1918 to 1933. Substantial research about the so-called *Angestelltenromane* of the Weimar Republic, already exists, as previously referred to. These novels tend to be socially critical and to evidence anguish, to culminate in a literary scene that, as Jordan points out, encompasses the "bürgerlichen und linksbürgerlichen, [...] 'linken', sozialistischen oder sozialromantischen, wie [...] wertkonservativen bis reaktionären Angestelltenromane und -erzählungen."<sup>55</sup> Written at a time when global economic crisis caused hardship, this affected *Angestellte* not only in terms of material poverty, but also specifically in terms of status and identity – for this class, physical and psychological crises combined. Existing literature is differentiated by gender<sup>56</sup> as well as by narratorial stance, reflecting the influx of women into the *Angestellten*-stratum, which is known to have begun by 1882 and to have been subject to a massive increase

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<sup>55</sup> Jordan, *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, p. 310.

<sup>56</sup> Rudolf Braune, Irmgard Keun and Christa Anita Brück, for instance, portray female identity and plight in respect of lack of alternatives and opportunity, from different perspectives. Braune's social critique has a radical left political bias, the author having been a communist, while Keun provides modernist narratives such as *Das kunstseidene Mädchen*, a fictional diary that facilitates an apparently formless 'stream of consciousness' structure without apparent political tendency. (Cf. Rudolf Braune. *Das Mädchen an der Orga Privat*. Frankfurt: Sozietätsverlag, 1930; Irmgard Keun. *Das kunstseidene Mädchen*. Berlin: Universitas, 1932.) Brück's *Schicksale hinter Schreibmaschinen*, on the other hand, highlights sexual exploitation at work and focuses on providing a cutting gender critique. (Cf. Christa Anita Brück. *Schicksale hinter Schreibmaschinen*. Berlin: Sieben-Stäbe, 1930.)

especially between 1907 and 1925.<sup>57</sup> The Weimar Republic was ultimately discarded as a potential focus for this study, for two reasons. Firstly, the term *Angestelltenroman*, as a received sub-generic and demographic-specific category, unduly clouds the actual research interest, which is to examine forgotten or under-valued realist fiction actually read by a specific demographic. Even if aesthetic criteria such as “wie Monotonie dar[zu]stellen, ohne monoton zu sein”, and “die Veranschaulichung der abstrakten Arbeit und ihrer Konsequenzen für das Befinden der einzelnen Angestellten”,<sup>58</sup> deemed characteristic of a good *Angestelltenroman* that reflects twentieth-century conditions, were widened to encompass a nineteenth-century context, the interest of this study includes, but is not limited to, criteria such as white-collar working environments and protagonists. It also encompasses other literary genres if these are found to have been capable of shaping, as well as being shaped by, values, expectations and needs of the new middle class as a major reading demographic. Secondly, an under-investigated phase in its development appeared as a more attractive research parameter. The gendered aspect, evidenced strongly in prose fiction emerging in the Weimar Republic, on the other hand gave rise to the question when and how female authors began to include the new middle class working environment, and portrayals of female employees, or independent women in their fiction.

Prose fiction texts with the earliest publication dates in respect of depictions of the white-collar milieu indicate that the time-span from 1850 to 1870 provides potential interest for study. The narrative time of *Hohenheim & Co.*, for instance, is 1857; its publication date, 1873.<sup>59</sup> Its setting, Hamburg, recurs in examples of prose fiction with early publication dates, a fact that may well reflect the fact that *Angestellte* have been well-established in merchant cities since pre-industrial times. Gustav Kopal's text deals

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<sup>57</sup> Schulz summarises: “Die Zahl der weiblichen Angestellten (und Beamten) stieg bedeutend an, weit stärker als die der Angestellten insgesamt. [...] 1882 lag der Anteil der Frauen an den Angestellten bei 13 bis 18%, 1933 bei 38%. [...] am stärksten wuchs die Zahl der weiblichen Angestellten (und Beamten) zwischen 1907 und 1925, wahrscheinlich zwischen 1918 und 1925. Insgesamt verdreifachte sich die Zahl der weiblichen Angestellten 1907 bis 1925 auf rund 1,5 Mio. und wuchs ihr Anteil an den erwerbstätigen Frauen von 5 auf 12,6%. (Frevert, quoted in: Schulz, *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*, p. 73.)

<sup>58</sup> Heister, *Winzige Katastrophen*, p. 36.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Gustav Kopal. *Hohenheim & Co. Roman aus dem Hamburger Leben*. Hamburg: J. F. Richter, 1873.

with the subordinate but trusted, and hence pivotal position of *Angestellte* within a large organisation, and portrays employees exercising clearly defined roles within the office environment, usually thought to be a characteristic of later modern office environments. International trade, professional honour, religiosity as well as gender roles and the female social predicament are among the themes taken up in this novel. Notable also is the lack of anti-Semitic sentiment in this text, since this has at times been assumed to be widespread in the German white-collar and bourgeois milieu in the light of Gustav Freytag's bestseller *Soll und Haben*.<sup>60</sup> In Kopal's text, a visiting Jewish salesman is described without vilificatory commentary, instead being in receipt of, and standing up to "schlechte[] Witze[]" visited upon him by *Angestellte*.<sup>61</sup> Sub-textual reference to "junges Deutschland" is added early on to introduce a veiled, dissenting political stance.<sup>62</sup> The villain of this narrative, who, on the other hand is substantially derogated, is of Caucasian origin.<sup>63</sup> A potential research interest pertaining to this earlier era, therefore, would be to contribute to a more differentiated, less stereotypical impression regarding xenophobic proclivities of the post-revolutionary nineteenth-century bourgeoisie in Germany. A politically heterogeneous literary environment can be seen in Ewald August König's work, which includes stories that deal with the contemporaneous political situation and its effect on *Angestellte* as well as labourers, such as "Conservativ und liberal", which provides a surprisingly sympathetic account of the early social-democratic movement, specifically from the viewpoint of a positively-connoted *Angestellter*. Tales such as "Des Buchhalter's Jubiläum", set in 1854, and "Wie man zu Grossvaters Zeiten Commis wurde", a story framed within a story which refers to a still earlier, though unspecified time, thematise positive (and hence desirable) values on the one hand, and socially critical material on the other, including

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. Freytag. *Soll und Haben*. – Freytag's novel was translated into almost all European languages, the first English translation appearing in 1857. (Cf. Gustav Feytag. [Georgiana Harcourt transl.] *Debit and Credit*. London: Bentley, 1857.)

<sup>61</sup> Kopal, *Hohenheim & Co.*, p. 69.

<sup>62</sup> Kopal, *Hohenheim & Co.*, p. 13.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. for instance, Kopal. *Hohenheim & Co.*, pp. 69-73, 109-113.

the straits placed on artisans at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, and incongruous business practices in respect of apprentices.<sup>64</sup>

### Contexts of a Reading Public

Authors writing popular literature around the turn of the nineteenth century were unavoidably affected by the previously alluded-to epistemological shifts that characterises this period, and their work contributed to the “Umwertung” and “Aufwertung”<sup>65</sup> of values – concepts that can be considered keywords of this era. Specifics of epistemological shifts occurring in the mid- to late nineteenth century are summarised by the historian Volker Berghahn, who comments on the influence of Darwinian evolutionary hypotheses on the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche:

Since humans were blindly driven by their impulses, the real value of life did not lie in an ascetic retreat from the world, but in the affirmation of the will through struggle. There were no other values. [...] As far as morality was concerned, Nietzsche would merely recognize the existence of relative yardsticks.<sup>66</sup>

Nietzsche’s conclusion, that the meaning of life equates to the will to power was of course widely embraced across Europe and America – Germany was a late-comer to this, as Nietzsche himself observed when he complained in 1888 that “I have my readers everywhere, in Vienna, St Petersburg, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Paris, and New York – but I have none in Europe’s flat-land – Germany”.<sup>67</sup> Literary responses of this period are ways of relating to these profound *perceptual* changes, whether progressively or retroactively, by engagement or withdrawal, with both modes potentially being acts of resistance.

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<sup>64</sup> Cf. Ewald August König. *Humoristische Bilder aus dem Kaufmannsleben*. Verlag Jul. Bagel. Mülheim an der Ruhr: 1864.

<sup>65</sup> Brinker-Gabler, “Zwischen Tradition und Moderne”, p. 169.

<sup>66</sup> Volker Berghahn. *Imperial Germany, 1871-1914. Economy, Society, Culture, and Politics*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1994, p. 180.

<sup>67</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche. (Anthony M. Ludovici transl.) *The Case of Wagner, Nietzsche Contra Wagner, and Selected Aphorisms*. Edinburgh/London: T.N. Foulis, 1911, p. 57.



In his study of the history of the German lending library, Alberto Martino identifies that “parallel zum gewaltigen Prozeß der Verstädterung vollzieht sich im letzten Drittel des 19. Jahrhunderts die zweite Leserevolution”.<sup>68</sup> Focusing on national literacy on the one hand,<sup>69</sup> and on a collective need for “informative[]” as well as “evasorische[] Lektüre” on the other, he highlights that

die verhältnismäßig schnelle Entstehung einer großen Zahl von Angestellten, einer sozialen Gruppe, die seit je ein nahes Verhältnis zum Lesen und Schreiben gehabt hat, [stellt] einen klaren Indikator für die Verbreitung von Schulbildung und Lektüre dar.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Alberto Martino. *Die deutsche Leihbibliothek. Geschichte einer literarischen Institution (1756-1914)*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1990, p. 308. – According to Martino, the first “Leserevolution” took place in the late eighteenth century. (Cf. Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, pp. 9-14.)

<sup>69</sup> In respect of literacy and educational status, Martino reports that “der Analphabetismus sinkt in Preußen zwischen 1848 und 1871 von 20 auf 10% der Erwachsenenbevölkerung. Im Jahre 1883 und bis 1890 war nur noch 1% der Rekruten des Deutschen Reichs analphabetisch. Der Besuch der Volksschule steigt in Preußen – zwischen 1846 und 1911 – von 1 255,000 Schülern im Jahre 1846 auf 3 293,000 im Jahre 1911; jener der Mittelschule von 51,000 Schülern im Jahre 1846 auf 116,000 im Jahre 1911 an. Die Zahl der Besucher der Höheren Schule steigt von 10,900 im Jahre 1846 auf 87,000 im Jahre 1911. Im selben Zeitraum erfährt der Besuch der Berufsschulen eine achtfache Steigerung [...] Im gleichen Zeitraum stieg die Zahl der Studenten an den Technischen Hochschulen in Deutschland von weniger als 3,000 auf 11,000.” (Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 295.) – The strongly hierarchical character of the education system as a whole, however, becomes clear from the finding that “von allen preußischen Studenten des Studienjahres 1911/1912 stammten 33,2% aus der führenden Gesellschaftsschicht, 45,5% aus dem Großbürgertum, 21,2% aus dem Kleinbürgertum, 0,18% aus dem Proletariat.” (Konrad Jarausch, quoted in Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 297.)

<sup>70</sup> Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 294, 300. – Martino acknowledges a “Prozeß der Demokratisierung des Lesens” with “regionale[n] und konfessionelle[n] Phasenverschiebungen und Klassen- und Berufsunterschiede[n] im Konsum von Lesestoffen” and highlights that “nach der Aufhebung des Sozialistengesetzes (1890) begannen die Arbeiterbibliotheken sich massiv zu verbreiten” due to the efforts of “Arbeiterbildungsvereine”. Nevertheless, the figures he gives for library use in Dresden and Berlin facilitate some sense of proportion: “In den Dresdner Volksbibliotheken des *Gemeinnützigen Vereins* entfielen um 1892 auf 8 670 Leser 913 Arbeiter, 2 800 Handels- und Gewerbsgehilfen, 519 Handels- und Gewerbetreibende, 584 Beamte, 1 900 Kinder, 1 560 Frauen”, while “unter den 14 721 Lesern der 25 Berliner Volksbibliotheken des Jahres 1890 befanden sich nur 636 Arbeiter (4.2%). 1 059 waren Beamte, 965 Lehrer, 5 363 Kaufleute, Gewerbetreibende, Handwerker, Gesellen; 3 098 Studenten, Gymnasiasten, Schüler; 3 406 Frauen, 195 Soldaten. Nur eine kleine Schicht von Arbeitern (wahrscheinlich Facharbeitern) besuchte die Volksbibliothek.” (Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 306.) – In the interests of accuracy, the total library membership in Dresden, based on the separate demographic figures is actually 8 276; the total adult membership therefore 6 376. The percentage of *Angestellte* is 43.9%, that of labourers 14.3%, artisans 8.1%, women 24.5% and public officials 9.1%. In Berlin, the number of labourers is 4.3%, public officials 7.2%, students 21%, women 23.1% and soldiers 1.3%. *Angestellte* and artisans are grouped together, most probably due to the newly emergent notion of the new middle class, which posited these two groups as a kind of amalgam. Since teachers belonged to this tier, these respective figures may be combined, to amount to 43%. In both Dresden and Berlin, the figures given for women, as well as *Angestellte* are striking. It is additionally worth noting that in the early 1890s, “Angestellter” did not yet function as an umbrella term designating white collar worker. The formalisation of the term *Angestellter* was attempted with the implementation of the *Angestelltensozialversicherung* (AVG) in 1911 (cf. Kocka, *Die Angestellten*, p. 140). Schulz summarises how even this legal codification was fraught: “Tatsächlich gelangte das AVG von 1911 nicht zu einer systematischen Definition des Angestellten. Es behalf sich mit einer Auflistung der Angestelltenthätigkeiten.” (Schulz, *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*, p. 4.) The historically older, essentially synonymous terms “Handelsgehilfe” and “Kaufleute” are still in use in the figures given above. On the other hand, the semantic interchangeability of “Beamter” and commercial employees, which Kocka demonstrates as being in evidence until at least 1880, is here clearly overcome, to concur with Kocka’s findings in respect of his “Begriffsgeschichte”. (Cf. Kocka, *Die Angestellten*, pp. 116 – 141, esp. 121-2, 126-7.)

Despite the increasing “Demokratisierung des Lesens”, which was underway, the new middle class is according to Martino’s figures disproportionately represented as readers. Jochen Schulte-Sasse observes in respect of scale:

There are two periods in German literary history in which the writing and reading of popular literature – as far as sheer numbers are concerned – expanded dramatically. The first occurred in the 1770s, the second in the last three decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>71</sup>

The “Leserevolution” was well underway by 1890, as highlighted by Martino and Schulte-Sasse, to engender a prolific literary market to investigate. The previously alluded-to heterogeneity of the demographic *Angestellte*<sup>72</sup> here does not present any undue difficulties. Compared to Deich’s sociological approach, for instance, which required the restriction of his study to a specific group,<sup>73</sup> the literary approach here adopted is able to encompass heuristic parameters without losing value – selection

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<sup>71</sup> Jochen Schulte-Sasse. “Toward a ‘Culture’ for the Masses: The Socio-Psychological Function of Popular Literature in Germany and the U.S., 1880-1920”, in: *New German Critique*, No. 29, Spring-Summer, 1983, p. 86.

<sup>72</sup> Demographic scope becomes apparent from the summary of *Angestelltenverbände* provided by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung: associations categorised as “Freie Gewerkschaften”, consolidated in 1921 as the “Allgemeiner freier Angestelltenbund” (AfA) encompasses “Einzelgewerkschaften” founded in the nineteenth century, such as the “Allgemeine[n] deutsche[n] Sängerverband”, “Deutsche[n] Werkmeister-Verband”, “Genossenschaft deutscher Bühnenangehöriger”, “Zentralverband deutscher Zuschneidervereine” and “Zentralverband der deutschen Seemaschinisten” as well as regional associations of “Kaufleute” and “Versicherungsbeamten”, which were predecessors of the “Zentralverband der Angestellten” (ZdA), founded in 1919. Additionally, the “Bund der technischen Angestellten und Beamten (Butab)” is listed under this heading. Those organisations categorised as “christliche Gewerkschaften”, consolidated as the “Gesamtverband deutscher Angestelltengewerkschaften” (Gedag) in 1919, included the right-wing, anti-Semitic DHV, itself founded in 1893 as a conglomeration of some of the oldest existing associations, including the “Allgemeiner Deutscher Buchhandlungsgehilfenverband” (founded 1872), the “Buchhandlungs-Gehilfen-Verein zu Leipzig” (founded 1833) and the “Verein für Handlungs-Commis” (founded 1858). This heading further includes the “Fachverband der Privat-Eisenbahner” and “Verein deutscher Seesteuerleute zu Hamburg-Altona”. The “Verband der weiblichen Handels- und Büroangestellten” (VWA), established in 1919 and also categorised under “Christlichen Gewerkschaften” more uniformly encompasses commercial employees, in particular, the “Kaufmännische[n] und gewerbliche[n] Hilfsverein für weibliche Angestellte” (founded 1889). A third political overall category, the “Hirsch-Dunckersche Gewerkvereine,” conceived along left-liberal ideas and affiliated with the Historical School of National Economics, was consolidated as the “Gewerkschaftsbund der Angestellten” (GDA) in 1916. “Gründungsverbände” of the GDA include several regional “kaufmännische Vereine” and the “Gruben- und Fabrikbeamten-Verband” (founded 1881); further, “Einzelgewerkschaften” included the “Allgemeiner Eisenbahner-Verband E.V. (AEV)” and the “Deutsche[n] Bankbeamten-Verein E.V. (DBV)” (founded 1894).

(<http://library.fes.de/angestellte/organisation/lit.pdf>. Access ed 21 June 2013.) The AVG codification achieved some degree of coherence: “Als angestelltenversicherungspflichtig bezeichnete das Gesetz von 1911: 1. Angestellte in leitender Stellung, .... 2. Betriebsbeamte, Werkmeister und andere Angestellte in einer ähnlich gehobenen oder höheren Stellung ohne Rücksicht auf ihre Vorbildung, Bureauangestellte, soweit sie nicht mit niederen oder lediglich mechanischen Dienstleistungen beschäftigt werden, ... 3. Handlungsgehilfen und Gehilfen in Apotheken, 4. Bühnen- und Orchestermitglieder ohne Rücksicht auf den Kunstwert der Leistungen, 5. Lehrer und Erzieher, 6. Bestimmte Mitglieder von Schiffsbesatzungen (sic.). Als Versicherungspflichtgrenze galt ein Jahresverdienst von 5000 Mark.” (Kocka, *Die Angestellten*, p. 135.)

<sup>73</sup> Deich’s focus is restricted to commercial *Angestellte*, or the “Kaufmannstand”. (Deich, *Der Angestellte im Roman*, p. 16.)

criteria are thematic content, publication environment and literary genres known to address the middle classes on the other.

A second reason for choosing the time-span 1890-1914 is that it marks a problematic, as well as an intense phase in the demographic development of the *Angestellten*. Not only did this development occur at an accelerated pace, with ever-increasing numbers of graduates emerging from technical colleges and vocationally-orientated institutions,<sup>74</sup> and, as Heister highlights, intensified rationalisation procedures in ever-enlarging businesses. This development was also attended by political manipulation, a circumstance detectable in how the label new middle class, was being marketed at that time:

Das Schlagwort vom 'neuen Mittelstand', das eine durch objektive Interessenlagen kaum gerechtfertigte Übereinstimmung zwischen kleinen Selbständigen ('alten Mittelstand') und Angestellten ('neuer Mittelstand') suggerierte, wurde von den Befürwortern der Angestelltensozialversicherung geschickt eingesetzt. Dieser ungenaue, ideologisch aufgeladene Begriff erlaubte es, in einer vom Zerfall ständischer Strukturen gekennzeichneten Wirklichkeit die traditionellen ständischen Implikationen des Wortes zu übernehmen und zugleich etwas von zukunftsfroher Zuversicht auszustrahlen.<sup>75</sup>

Schulz agrees:

Bei der Ausgestaltung des AVG als Angestelltensozialversicherung kooperierten bürgerliche Parteien, die die Angestellten als zunehmend wichtige Wählergruppe gewinnen wollten, mit der Regierung und mit Arbeitgebern, die ihre anfänglich heftige Ablehnung überwinden, um zu verhindern, daß sich Angestellte und Arbeiter solidarisierten. Dies hatten die Sozialdemokratie und die Freien Gewerkschaften vergeblich zu forcieren versucht. Mit dem AVG festigten die Angestellten ihren gesellschaftspolitischen Anspruch als antisozialistisches Bollwerk und 'neuer Mittelstand'.<sup>76</sup>

The psychological effects of the politically championed term new middle class on the self-perception and expectations of *Angestellte* is not obvious from Kocka's and Schulz's readings. Schulz's idea that an already existent socio-political "Anspruch" was being "[ge]festigt" is the more helpful standpoint when it comes to exploring this relationship. While Kocka is right in emphasising the insidiousness and potential

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<sup>74</sup> Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 295.

<sup>75</sup> Kocka, *Die Angestellten*, p. 87.

<sup>76</sup> Schulz, *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*, pp. 29-30.

manipulability inherent to concept-formation, especially that which occurs by design, in this context he over-emphasises both the power of suggestion and the idea of misconstruction. The inherited self-perception of *Angestellte* was bourgeois, a position that had been compounded by socialists, who tended to be revolutionary in outlook since at least 1875.<sup>77</sup> However, he essentially offers a polarising analysis: on the one hand, the dignified, tradition-bound concept *Mittelstand*, or old middle class of artisans, is said to be annexed by politicians, while the actual defunctness of the concept – traditional structures being “vom Zerfall [...] gekennzeichnet[]” – is concealed in the suggestive power of the concept of tradition. Tradition, of course, signals such values as substance, dignity and significance, while at a subconscious level connoting authenticity in the sense of indigenous and intrinsic worth. At the same time, the adverbial ‘new’ is seen as being used to project an artificial substantiation into the future. Construction by misappropriation for the maintenance of power-relations is here the perspective, and the implicit notion arises that the subjective formation of meaning through affect, often involving successive generations, is non-existent, or at least, irrelevant. This point is emphasised because Kocka’s standpoint could prompt a reductive reading of literary texts if its premise were tacitly accepted: narrative value could come primarily to be determined simply according to whether or not it challenges the existing political and economic status quo, akin to Marxist criticism. Schulz’s more purely descriptive acknowledgement of an existing “Anspruch” that was subject to *consolidation* through a specific definition, on the other hand, allows for an acknowledgement that conceptual concretisation and polarisation took place without deeming self-perception in terms of tradition to be solely a mono-dimensional, politically connoted psychological phenomenon.

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<sup>77</sup> Cf. for instance Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht 1871-1914*, p. 174.

Two primary criteria for choosing the case study authors are that they have been marginalised in literary-historical records and that they were read by the new middle class. The first of these two criteria signals this study's literary, as well as historical purpose: the interest here is not only what insights realist popular fiction texts can provide about the time in which they were published, but also their literary quality. By searching out texts from the non-canonical literary market, inevitably, questions about literary value come to the fore. The traditional, polarised literary-critical perspective, which tends to posit the idea of a yawning gap between "Schöne Literatur" on the one hand, and "Trivallliteratur" on the other, is necessarily suspended as unhelpful to this study's aims. Jochen Schulte-Sasse's observations elucidate the issue:

Es sollte [...] bedacht werden, ob das scheinbare Phänomen 'Kitsch', das wir so selbstverständlich als existent voraussetzen, nicht eine Funktion seiner Definition sein kann. Oder: ob die Schlagworte 'Kitsch' und 'Trivallliteratur' es im Deutschen mit Recht nahelegen, hinter diesen Worten einen ganz bestimmten, ausgrenzbaren und definierbaren Bereich von Literatur zu vermuten. Denn die andauernden Definitionsbemühungen könnten im deutschsprachigen Raum bedeutungs- und begriffsgeschichtliche oder allgemeinere geistesgeschichtliche Voraussetzungen haben, die mit den literarischen Verhältnissen selbst gar nichts oder zumindest gar nichts mehr zu tun haben; eine theorieimmanente Tradierung systematisierter literarischer Wertvorstellungen könnten den Blick für die Eigenarten und Gliederungen der Massensliteratur weitgehend verstellt haben. Es sei nur am Rande darauf verwiesen, daß sich z.B. die moderne Massensliteratur in Deutschland und Amerika nicht wesentlich unterscheidet, aber trotz der vielen "theories of evaluation" hat es in Amerika kein Pendant zur Kitschtheorie gegeben. Man sah und benannte meistens isolierbare Aspekte des literarischen Versagens und nicht einen abgeschlossenen, der hohen Kunst prinzipiell entgegengesetzten Bereich der Literatur, den man begrifflich abgrenzen könnte.<sup>78</sup>

The use of sub-generic labels, as aspect of the "andauernde Definitionsbemühungen" identified by Schulte-Sasse, presents a particular challenge from the point of view of this study. Dietger Pforte's characterisation of "Heftromane" may be used to illustrate this point. According to Pforte, publication restrictions placed on authors who wrote

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<sup>78</sup> Jochen Schulte-Sasse. *Die Kritik an der Trivallliteratur seit der Aufklärung*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1971, p. 18. – Some of the observations made by critics, including Schulte-Sasse, in the 1970s and 80s have not been outmoded by more recent studies, as will be argued later (cf. "Conclusion", pp. 346-7).

these texts include the requirement not to cross generic material. Authors should instead to produce readily recognisable texts, such as

Frauenromane (Liebes-, Schicksals-, Adels-, Arzt-, Heimat- usw. Romane), Wildwestromane, Kriminalromane, Science Fiction-Romane, Landser-Romane, Grusel und Horror-Romane, Pornoromane.<sup>79</sup>

Thematic restriction along mono-dimensional lines is here taken to mean ephemeral and unchallenging literature. That the levelling of thematic headings can itself produce false equivalencies will be immediately apparent – the production of “Pornoromane”, for instance, necessitates a gratuitous, quasi-voyeuristic gist not inherent – or appropriate – to other headings. Further, what mono-thematic labelling of fiction actually means in practice is not clear, since even relatively unchallenging literary texts are not adequately characterised by a single theme, even where a specific subject can be said to dominate. The presence of a directive premise or subject *may* facilitate a focus on comforting stereotypes, sensationalism, or story elements with a compensatory rather than challenging function. It does not, however, *necessarily* preclude either deeper explorations of consciousness, or – possibly skilfully veiled – social critique, to contribute to “Erkenntnis” in Heister’s sense.<sup>80</sup> Lastly, it can be difficult in retrospect to recognise the significance of a specific critique, and therefore to underestimate it – the novels of Eugenie Marlitt, which emphasise an ambivalent anti-aristocratic or an anti-Catholic stance, and which criticise *Gründerjahre* speculators come to mind here<sup>81</sup> – because it is difficult to appreciate the collective psychology and needs of another time.

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<sup>79</sup> Dietger Pforte. “Bedingungen und Formen der materiellen und immateriellen Produktion von Hefromanen”, in: Annamaria Rucktäschel/Hans Dieter Zimmermann (eds.) *Trivialliteratur*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1976, p. 48.

<sup>80</sup> Heister, *Winzige Katastrophen*, p. 36.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. for instance, Eugenie Marlitt. *Die Goldelse*. Leipzig: Keil, 1867; Eugenie Marlitt. *Die zweite Frau*. Leipzig: Keil, [1874]; Eugenie Marlitt. *Im Hause des Kommerzienrats*. Leipzig: Keil, [1877]. – Heide Radeck dismisses texts by Marlitt and Elisabeth Werner among others summarily, as as examples of a style characterised by an “Anhäufung von Sentimentalität” and “kaum noch zu übertreffendes Beispiel[e] für die Trivialität”. The basis for judgement here is a critical viewpoint unsympathetic to the historicity of these texts; narratives are criticised because they evidence insufficient political activism regarding “das Problem der Industrie und des Proletariats”. (Heide Radeck. *Zur Geschichte von Roman und Erzählung in der “Gartenlaube” (1853-1914)*. Dissertation: Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, 1967, p. 81.) Malgorzata Trifkovic, on the other hand, acknowledges Marlitt’s significance in respect of her “schonungslose Adelskritik”, anti-Catholicism and criticism of “neureichen Bürgern, die durch die Gründerjahre infolge von Spekulation und dunklen Menschenhaften zu unverdientem Reichtum gekommen waren”. She describes these characteristics in respect of Marlitt’s works published between 1866 and 1887. (Malgorzata Trifkovic.

Rather than locking up expectations of content by using sub-generic definitions<sup>82</sup> that implicitly accept the sense of polarisation between “Schöne Literatur” and “Trivialliteratur” as valid, the relationship of specific literary syntheses to a set of dominant, shifting and imperilled values is instead taken as focus in this study. To underpin this viewpoint, a proposition coined in 1968, which contrasts “Trivialliteratur” with “Unterhaltungsliteratur” is enlisted as an effort towards a more open framework. Hans Foltin characterises “Trivialliteratur” by a lack of artistic *autonomy*:

Die inhaltliche Normierung des Reihenromans [...] wird dadurch bewirkt, daß die Verleger ihren – häufig kontraktlich zur Lieferung von Romanmanuskripten innerhalb bestimmter Fristen verpflichteten – Autoren in der Regel bereits Titel und Fabel vorgeben, so daß sich die letzteren lediglich die Einzelheiten selber ausdenken müssen, auch dabei noch gebunden an zahlreiche Vorschriften, die ihnen im Hinblick auf Publikumswirksamkeit, Vermeidung von Zensurmaßnahmen, die Länge des Manuskripts und den Gesamtcharakter der betreffenden Reihe (zugeschnitten z.B. auf ältere weibliche Leser mit Volksschulbildung) gemacht werden. Die Texte der Schriftsteller werden dann von Lektoren – auch sprachlich – geglättet und von Selbstkontrollinstanzen oder Testlesern nochmals überprüft, kurz: Die Herstellung eines Trivialromans unterscheidet sich nicht mehr von derjenigen anderer industrieller Güter.<sup>83</sup>

The “Unterhaltungsroman”, by contrast, is described in terms of publication conditions that allow for a – here more or less – significant degree of authorial autonomy:

Der Unterhaltungsroman hebt sich heute im allgemeinen schon dadurch vom Trivialroman ab, daß seine Verfasser mehr Freiheit genießen und deshalb ihre Besonderheit besser zur Geltung bringen können. Schriftsteller [...] sind in der Regel nicht stärker von ihren Verlegern abhängig als die Autoren der Hochliteratur. Sie wahren sich oft auch gegenüber ihrem Publikum einen gewissen Spielraum, treiben gelegentlich Milieu- oder Quellenstudien, verzichten ab und zu aufs Happy-End, üben hier und da Kritik an bestehenden Vorurteilen usw.; daneben handhaben sie strukturelle und sprachliche Mittel mit einigem Geschick, wenn auch stets im Blick auf das Fassungsvermögen des durchschnittlichen Lesers. Die Unterhaltungsromane bekannter Autoren erreichen meist ein breiteres Publikum als

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“Literatur und Autorinnen in der *Gartenlaube* (1873-1879)”, in: Christina Hofmeister, Kristina Even and Malgorzata Trifkovic. “Frauenfrage, Frauenbewegung und Literatur in der *Gartenlaube*”, in: Dirk Hempel. *Literatur und bürgerliche Frauenbewegung im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik: Forschungsberichte und Studien*. Hamburg: Univ., Inst. für Germanistik II, 2010, p. 119, 120.)

<sup>82</sup> From this point of view, the usefulness of the term *Angestelltenroman* itself may be questioned, since this heading, in association with other sub-genres, tends to indicate thematic content along mono-dimensional lines, reminiscent of Deich’s approach, discussed earlier. The consequent designation ‘trivial’ is one reason for such studies as Heister’s and Jordan’s, which aim to affirm or improve the status of the sub-genre. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, Jordan’s conclusion is that “als ästhetische Einheit gibt es den Angestelltenroman nicht”, because it evidences heterogeneous narratorial standpoints from across the political spectrum, as well as in terms of the themes taken up. (Jordan, *Zwischen Zerstreuung und Berausung*, p. 310.)

<sup>83</sup> Hans Friedrich Foltin, quoted in: Albert Klein/Heinz Hecker. *Trivialliteratur*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1977, p. 13.

die auf bestimmte Lesergruppen zugeschnittenen Trivialromane; sie sind manchmal sogar für hochgebildete Leser anziehend [...].<sup>84</sup>

Foltin's basic idea, that of a middle strand or body of fictional narratives which constitutes a fluid spectrum of gradation between the thematically and stylistically bound to the highly autonomous will be used as conceptual framework for this study. On the other hand, neither his assumptions about what constitutes literary quality nor his concessionary gist, demonstrated in the use of qualifiers such as "*gewisser Spielraum*", "*gelegentlich[e]* Milieu- oder Quellenstudien" or "Kritik an [...] Vorurteilen" practised only "hier und da", are accepted. That the term "Unterhaltungsliteratur" has itself often been taken as synonymous with "Trivialliteratur", and therefore provides a somewhat uneasy compromise, is also acknowledged. "Unterhaltungsliteratur" will here be used interchangeably with the more neutral English term "prose fiction".

The second of the primary criteria previously referred to in respect of the choice of case study texts, that they were read by the new middle class, relates at face-value specifically to the historical interest of the enquiry. Yet historical and literary concerns actually intersect. On the one hand, the period 1890-1914 is a socio-historic context the significance of which has been contested by historians in relation to the failure of the Weimar Republic, as already alluded to. The kind of presence which *Angestellte* had in this period, both through their literary production and consumption, here becomes a focus, given the potential of literary texts to confirm, challenge and shape values and attitudes. Martino's focus on psychological, rather than market-orientated aspects of the second "Leserevolution" provides a useful articulation, not only of what the conditions of the late nineteenth century *actually* meant for the new middle class, but also of the role prose fiction played at that time:

Die sozialpsychische Bewältigung des stürmischen Wandels geschah zu einem erheblichen Teil über das gedruckte Wort. Der Zwang, sich in einer von rasanter regionaler und sozialer Mobilität geprägten Gesellschaft zu orientieren und sich dem neuen Milieu und den neuen Arbeitsverhältnissen in der Industrie anzupassen, bildete einen fruchtbaren Nährboden für die Verbreitung der informativen Lektüre,

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<sup>84</sup> Klein/Hecker, *Trivialliteratur*, p. 13.



wie der ungeheure Erfolg von Konversationslexika und Sachbüchern beweist. Der Verlust der alten Bindungen und Gewißheiten, die durch die neue Umwelt erzwungene Mentalitätsänderung, die Vereinsamung und Erfahrungsarmut riefen aber auch ein akutes Bedürfnis nach psychologischem Ausgleich und kompensatorischen Erlebnissen hervor. Die Funktion, Sekundärerfahrungen zu vermitteln, Trost für die verlorenen Bindungen und Gewißheiten zu spenden und durch Identifikation mit fremden Schicksalen die Überwindung der Isolation zu ermöglichen, übernahmen die massenweise produzierte Belletristik und der Kolportageroman.<sup>85</sup>

Martino's observations are a useful reminder of the reciprocity between demand and production, or, to acknowledge the psychological reality of the situation, between need and supply. The widespread need for orientation in an unfamiliar environment is readily apprehended from the high demand for "Konversationslexika" and "Sachbüchern".<sup>86</sup> On the other hand, still more importantly for this study is the "sozialpsychische Bewältigung des stürmischen Wandels" by means of fictional texts, which are capable of facilitating "psychologischen Ausgleich". Martino observes further,

Die Nachfrage nach evasorischer Lektüre war bei allen Schichten der Gesellschaft gleich stark. Das Leiden an der industrialisierten Gesellschaft war nicht auf proletarische Schichten ländlicher Herkunft beschränkt.<sup>87</sup>

While Martino's identification of a *universal* need for narrative validates this study *per se*, it also again invites questions about the literary value of texts to be chosen as case studies. The theoretical premise of a differentiated view of *Unterhaltungsliteratur*, which serves a *heterogeneous* mass reading market and which is necessarily subject to gradations across the entire spectrum of perceived literary artistry and conceptual sophistication, resonates with Carl Gustav Jung's discussion of divergent approaches to literature:

There is a fundamental difference of approach between the psychologist's examination of a literary work, and that of the literary critic. [...] An exciting narrative that is apparently quite devoid of psychological exposition is just what interests the psychologist most of all. Such a tale is built upon a groundwork of implicit psychological assumptions, and, in the measure that the author is unconscious of them, they reveal themselves, pure and unalloyed, to the critical discernment. In the psychological novel, on the other hand, the author himself attempts to reshape his

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<sup>85</sup> Martino. *Leihbibliothek*, p. 300.

<sup>86</sup> Martino. *Leihbibliothek*, p. 300.

<sup>87</sup> Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 300.

material so as to raise it from the level of crude contingency to that of psychological exposition and illumination.<sup>88</sup>

Novels fitting the term *Unterhaltungsliteratur* may be identified by the attribute that they are likely to contain both unconscious “psychological assumptions” and deliberate “psychological exposition and illumination”.<sup>89</sup> Further, according to Jung, prose fiction offering a largely or solely conscious and differentiated psychological exposition does not *inevitably* amount to a text of superior quality: it can either consist of an “expression which forces the reader to greater clarity and depth of [...] insight” or may “cloud the psychological significance of the work or hide it from view.”<sup>90</sup> Lastly, the view that the value of prose fiction is *exclusively* defineable in terms of its ability to support socio-psychological adaptation, a view that is implicit in Martino’s exposition, is put in question. Jung goes on to distinguish a “psychological” and a “visionary” mode in the creation of fiction:

The profound difference between the first and second parts of *Faust* marks the difference between the psychological and the visionary modes of artistic creation. The latter reverses all the conditions of the former. The experience that furnishes the material for artistic expression is no longer familiar. It is a strange something that derives its existence from the hinterland of man’s mind – that suggests the abyss of time separating us from pre-human ages, or evokes a super-human world of contrasting light and darkness. It is a primordial experience which surpasses man’s understanding, and to which he is therefore in danger of succumbing [...] a grimly ridiculous sample of the eternal chaos – a *crimen laesae majestatis humanae*, to use Nietzsche’s words – it bursts asunder our human standards of value and of aesthetic form.<sup>91</sup>

While it is not my intention to present case studies that contain such archetypal matter as Jung identifies in *Faust*,<sup>92</sup> an acknowledgement of the existence of such material as a stratum of experience, and of the potential of literary fiction to relate it, is important. It informs the understanding of “narrative” in this study: an exploration of *consciousness processes*, rather than a focus on the social context and political functionality of prose

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<sup>88</sup> Carl Gustav Jung. *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. London: Routledge, 1990, pp. 177-8. (First publication 1933.)

<sup>89</sup> Jung, *Modern Man*, p. 178.

<sup>90</sup> Jung, *Modern Man*, pp. 178, 179.

<sup>91</sup> Jung, *Modern Man*, pp. 180-1.

<sup>92</sup> Jung also references Rider Haggard, Benoit, Arthur Conan Doyle and Hermann Merville as further examples of undifferentiated, and therefore unalloyed, material. (Cf. Jung, *Modern Man*, p. 178.)

fiction texts alone, forms its methodological underpinning, not least to refute any potentially reductive readings of chosen texts.<sup>93</sup>

### On the Trail of the Literature of the New Middle Class in the Kaiserreich

Prose fiction texts that incorporate *Angestellte* and their working sphere in some structurally integral way would have appealed to members of the new middle class, since they both construct and confirm the presence of this developing demographic in specific ways. An examination of thematically-specific late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century narratives reveals their capacity to provide societal observations, as well as contemporaneous value perceptions and moral preoccupations. Themes include power-hungry *Angestellte* who plot for positions of control at their employer's expense, and ultimately or almost cause the ruin of the latter and his family.<sup>94</sup> This depiction resonates with documented employers' concerns about their potential vulnerability to *Angestellte*, such as, for instance Werner Siemens's assertion that "im Beamtenpersonal liegt unsere Achillesferse".<sup>95</sup> Employers who have risen to a position of power and autonomy above their natural talents and who themselves consequently ruin both family and business is a further iterated theme.<sup>96</sup> Fictional and life-writing accounts in this case point to a gap in socio-historical research. Irresponsible speculation during the *Gründerkrise* after 1873 is a thematic component of Theodor Duimchen's novel *Bruch*, which features both the devouring type of *Angestellten* and the reckless investor. Among other things, it therefore explores issues of honour in

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<sup>93</sup> For a further discussion of this viewpoint, cf. "Further Methodological Considerations", pp. 50-2.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. for instance, Theodor Duimchen. *Bruch. Roman*. Berlin: Hüpenden und Merzyn, 1904; Ewald August König. *Humoristische Bilder aus dem Kaufmannsleben*. Mülheim a.d. Ruhr: Verlag Jul. Bagel, 1864. – In the former, financial ruin is the ultimate outcome; in the latter, a series of ironic-humorous narrative turns averts disaster.

<sup>95</sup> Werner Siemens to Carl Siemens, 21/12/1857, quoted in: Kocka, *Die Angestellten*, p. 55.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. for instance, Rudolf Herzog. *Zum weißen Schwan*. Roman. Berlin: Ullstein, 1897; Robert Walser. *Der Gehülfe*. Berlin: Cassirer, 1908; Gustav Falke. *Die Stadt mit den goldenen Türmen*. Berlin: Grote, 1912.) – The narrative time of Falke's autobiography commences in the mid-nineteenth century.

business and loyalty in relationships, and weighs material value against personal integrity, as well as non-utilitarian motives. In Heinrich Reth's memoirs, the portrayal of Jewish employers "Wallenstein & Co." compares their honourable and astute business practices with the corrupt procedures of "Drücker & Sohn", who exploit both customers and employees, and are on that account labelled a "Knochenmühle".<sup>97</sup> *Angestellte* in Reth's narrative also find themselves forced to confront the anti-Semitism of their "Verband" when their employers defend themselves against this.<sup>98</sup> Many of these narratives, additionally, contain more or less notable portrayals of women – in the case of *Bruch*, for instance, higher education for girls is advocated in the trajectory of the young heroine Marie Pahlen, who becomes a doctor of philosophy,<sup>99</sup> while the potential for personal integrity, including an ethical and insightful consciousness, is not distinguished by gender.

Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century depictions specifically of female *Angestellte* also occur, though the former are sparse. A notable example, which emphasises both female competence and male sexual exploitation of female employees appears in Alfred Bock's narrative "Edi Stevens".<sup>100</sup> This narrative highlights female employment as driven by economic necessity, and as an interim state pending marriage. A highly ambivalent account in respect of female stature emerges from Heinrich Reth's memoirs, which testify to the incompetence of some newly employed female typists on the one hand, and to a high degree of competence and tenacity in the daughter of a deceased entrepreneur, who is interpreted to have inherited his business acumen, on the other. This narrative tends to suggest that while female competence is a possibility, it is nevertheless an exception, rather than the rule.<sup>101</sup> Its observations of female

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<sup>97</sup> Heinrich Reth. *Noch ist die blühende, goldene Zeit. Aus den Wanderjahren eines jungen Kaufmanns*. Leipzig: Xenien, 1912, pp. 122; cf. also, pp. 165-6, 213-19.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Reth, *Noch ist die blühende, goldene Zeit*, pp. 184-201. – The "Verband", presumably the DHV, is referred to in terms of a meteoric rise, in itself an allusion of a lack of organic development. (Cf. Reth, *Noch ist die blühende, goldene Zeit*, p. 197.)

<sup>99</sup> Cf. for instance, Duimchen, *Bruch*, pp. 175-6. 341.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Alfred Bock. "Edi Stevens", in: *Wo die Straßen enger werden*. Leipzig: Baumert & Ronge, 1898.

<sup>101</sup> In this respect, Reth expresses what seems to have been the prevalent male viewpoint. An advertisement entitled "Tüchtige Kaufleute gesucht", for instance, added a few words about female *Angestellte*: "99 von 100 weiblichen kaufmännischen Angestellten eignen sich wohl nur für gleichmäßige,

intellectualism generally are uncomplimentary.<sup>102</sup> Max Kretzer's *Die Buchhalterin*<sup>103</sup> provides some resistance to gender stereotypes by maintaining a protagonist who is independent not only due to a high degree of vocational competence, but also due to her sense of honour in the workplace, as well as in interpersonal relationships. Lucie von Werner's capacity to be equal to the multiple amorous advances of male colleagues with charm here provides some notable narrative moments. The novel also emphasises, on the other hand, that she does not pursue a profession by choice and the narrative trajectory clearly tends towards the marriage that is its climax, which relieves her of the necessity to pursue paid employment.

### On the Trail of Female Authors

What ultimately motivates this study is how *female* authors depicted society, the new middle class stratum and women – when and how they found their voices to express their deeper values, while manifesting adaptations and resistances to what Brinker-Gabler terms the steamrolling modernisations of the time.<sup>104</sup> The narratives outlined above may therefore be taken as context, rather than as focus. While pursuing these new middle class texts of the *Kaiserreich*, the under-representation of female authors became ever more apparent. Yet as already observed, female *Angestellte* form an inseparable aspect of demographic development, observably since 1882:

Die Zahl der weiblichen Angestellten (und Beamten) stieg bedeutend an, weit stärker als die der Angestellten insgesamt. [...] 1882 lag der Anteil der Frauen an den Angestellten bei 13 bis 18%, 1933 bei 38%. Setzt man, um einen Anhaltspunkt zu haben, die Zahl der männlichen Angestellten und Beamten 1882 gleich 100, so

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fortlaufende Arbeiten, die sich in einem ganz bestimmten Rahmen halten.. [...] Sowie das Geringste vorkommt, was über den Rahmen des Alltäglichen hinausgeht, versagen jene Fräulein sofort [...]" F. Notvest, quoted in: Ursula Nienhaus. "Von Töchtern und Schwestern. Zur vergessenen Geschichte der weiblichen Angestellten im deutschen Kaiserreich", in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft. Sonderheft. Angestellte im europäischen Vergleich. Die Herausbildung angestellter Mittelschichten seit dem späten 19. Jahrhundert*. Vol. 7 (1981), p. 310.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Reth, *Noch ist die blühende, goldene Zeit*, pp. 228, 304-5.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Max Kretzer. *Die Buchhalterin*. Berlin: Paul List, 1914.

<sup>104</sup> Brinker-Gabler. "Perspektiven des Übergangs", p. 169.

lautet der Wert für 1933 349; bei den weiblichen Angestellten und Beamten hingegen 2009.<sup>105</sup>

Additionally to the rapid influx of female employees into white-collar vocational spheres, women constituted a disproportionately high percentage of the contemporaneous readership, as seen in demographic figures of lending library memberships.<sup>106</sup> Further, their impact on best-selling family periodicals, in particular *Die Gartenlaube*, bears witness to a strong female presence as writers, as well as readers since the 1860s. Kirsten Belgum, for instance, points out that

the increase in readership in these and subsequent years has often been attributed to the popularity of the magazine's new contributing fiction author, Eugenie Marlitt, whose works may have attracted female readers in particular.<sup>107</sup>

Belgum here specifically refers to the publication of Marlitt's bestselling novel *Die Goldelse* in the *Gartenlaube* in serialised form in 1866.<sup>108</sup> This novel was followed by a series of highly popular narratives, as well as by a long succession of other prominent female authors.<sup>109</sup> Their narratives have been criticised for presenting heroines who, akin to those of Marlitt, ultimately "submit[] gladly to the male hero".<sup>110</sup> Yet in the context of the time, these protagonists were also

daring female appropriators of male gender roles, in particular through activism, involvement in public space, and the willingness, even eagerness to be money earners and not financially dependent.<sup>111</sup>

The scope of this type of female impact on the reading public becomes apparent from circulation figures, as well as the publication remit of the magazine:

Another source for this continuous and steady success [...] can be found in the magazine's dedication to the problem of defining Germany and German identity. In

<sup>105</sup> Schulz, *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*, p. 73.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 306.

<sup>107</sup> Kirsten Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation: Audience, Representation and the Production of Identity in Die Gartenlaube, 1853-1900*. Lincoln/London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998, p. 16.

<sup>108</sup> Subsequent to appearing in serialised form, *Die Goldelse* was published as an independent volume from 1867 onwards. (Cf. for instance, Todd Kontje, *Women, the Novel, and the German Nation 1771-1871: Domestic Fiction in the Fatherland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 184. Cf. also Eugenie Marlitt, *Die Goldelse*. Leipzig: Keil, 1867.) This novel was followed by a series of highly popular narratives, as well as by a succession of other prominent female authors.

<sup>109</sup> Marlitt's immediate successors Elisabeth Werner and Wilhelmine Heimbürg may here be mentioned; female contributors in the 1880s and 1890s are too numerous to provide a judicious overview, but included Fanny Lewald, Anna Ritter, Charlotte Niese, Wilhelmine von Hillern, Klara Biller, Helene Pichler, Luise Westkirch, Julie Ludwig, Stefanie Reyser and Isolde Kurz.

<sup>110</sup> Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation*, p. 139.

<sup>111</sup> Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation*, p. 139.

1875, four years after the founding of the German Empire, the *Gartenlaube* reached its peak with a circulation of approximately 382,000. This made the *Gartenlaube* the only periodical in nineteenth-century Germany to reach a circulation near 400,000, at a time when most daily newspapers did not print more than 4,000 copies. Not only was the *Gartenlaube*'s circulation unprecedented for Germany in the nineteenth century, its readership was considerably larger than the numbers of copies printed might indicate. The magazine's appearance in reading rooms, lending libraries, and cafes, as well as in the living rooms of many middle-class families, suggests that each copy was usually read by several people.<sup>112</sup>

The presence of women in popular fiction as readers *and* as authors, therefore, was a notable one, while at the same time, the purpose of popular fiction here was to 'define *German identity*' – and more specifically, middle-class identity. It is worth iterating that this process was a reciprocal one:

Of all the new periodical genres of the nineteenth century, the family magazines carefully tailored their offerings and presentation to satisfy the presumed wishes and tastes of the broad middle classes [...] one contemporary summarized this process in the axiom: "The more subscribers a magazine has, the more certain it is that the taste of the subscribers will exert a substantial influence on its literary production."<sup>113</sup>

A publication profile in *Die Gartenlaube* is here therefore taken as another strong indicator of authors whose fiction was read by late nineteenth-century *Angestellte*, and serves as a selection criterion for the case study authors. This choice necessitates a degree of re-evaluation against received negative impressions about this periodical, which identify it only with indoctrinating, politically right-wing content, seen as partially delivered in sentimental, nostalgic prose fiction. The actual situation however, is more complex. Until the death of its first editor, Ernst Keil, the publication remit had been an actively liberal one.<sup>114</sup> On the other hand, by the late nineteenth century, the overall emphasis of the magazine is acknowledged to have undergone a shift:

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<sup>112</sup> Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation*, p. 16.

<sup>113</sup> Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation*, p. 10.

<sup>114</sup> Todd Kontje's biographical sketch of Keil serves to elucidate the original motivation behind the *Gartenlaube*, which was to be maintained for twenty-five years: "Keil had begun his career as an apprentice bookseller in Weimar, where he soon came into contact with the writings of the Young Germans. He became a sharp critic of the reactionary *Vormärz* government, and an ardent supporter of liberal reform in a unified Germany. In 1845 Keil began publishing his first literary journal, *Der Leuchtturm* [The Lighthouse], which soon attracted the attention of the German censors. For three years he was on the run, as his liberal journal was forbidden in one German province after the next. His fortunes seemed to take a turn for the better when freedom of the press was granted throughout Germany in March, 1848, but the Prussian government soon clamped down with even tighter censorship laws when King Friedrich Wilhelm IV refused to accept the constitution of the Frankfurt National Assembly. The government revived its case against Keil's *Leuchtturm*, and by 1852 Keil found himself serving a nine-month prison sentence for his allegedly seditious journal. It was here that Keil first conceived *Die*

1878 stirbt Ernst Keil. Zugunsten einer politisch neutralen konservativen Gesinnung wird das politische Engagement der 'Gartenlaube' Anfang der 1880er Jahre abgebaut. Die 'Gartenlaube' wird bis 1904 vom Verlag Gebrüder Kröner herausgegeben [...]. Ihre Berichte sind zum Teil realitätsfremd und beschönigen die tatsächliche Situation.<sup>115</sup>

Kristina Even concurs, pointing out that “die politischen Themen und versteckten Nachrichten wurden weniger”<sup>116</sup> from the 1880s. From this time, therefore, an element of withdrawal marks the attitudinal stance of the middle classes, which continued to buy the magazine, albeit in gradually decreasing numbers.<sup>117</sup> Viewed psychologically, the shift can also be taken to indicate a slowing or pacing of inner adaptation to cultural and societal changes that proceeded so fast as to be experienced as a threat to identity. For the purposes of this study, the hypothesis that the diversity of the new middle class, as prominent readership, continued to mean a correspondingly heterogeneous, rather than homogeneous, and by implication trivial, literary standard will be pursued. It is significant, for instance, that the *Frauenbewegung* began to be represented in the magazine in the early 1890s, a time when “die Folgen der Industrialisierung und des demographischen Wandels [...] dazu führten, dass immer weniger Frauen heiraten konnten”.<sup>119</sup> Further, “versteckte Nachrichten” are not easy to control in prose fiction, due to the structural and thematic complexity, as well as semantic fluidity that characterises narrative in the absence of imposed, extreme control measures. The enquiry therefore will be concerned with the *potentialities* of narrative fiction appearing in this magazine in the late nineteenth century. The idea of a continuing heterogeneous literary standard will be tested by example, to examine whether, and to what extent, prose fiction appearing in *Die Gartenlaube* provided

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*Gartenlaube*, and by the end of the year the journal was underway.” (Todd Kontje. *Women, the Novel, and the German Nation 1771-1871: Domestic Fiction in the Fatherland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 183.)

<sup>115</sup> “Entstehung und Entwicklung der ‘Gartenlaube’, in: Cornelia Breimi/Barbara Cahn-Wegmann et.al. (eds.) *Kabinett für sentimentale Trivalliteratur. Über Frauenliteratur von der französischen Revolution bis zur Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Zürich: University of Zürich, 2004.

<sup>116</sup> Kristina Even. “Frauenthemen und Frauenbewegung in der ‘Gartenlaube’ (1885-1894)”, in: Dirk Hempel. *Literatur und bürgerliche Frauenbewegung im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik : Forschungsberichte und Studien*. Hamburg: Univ., Inst. für Germanistik II, 2010, p. 124.

<sup>117</sup> Kristina Even points out that by 1883, “die Anzahl der Auflagen” had reduced to “260,000.” (Even, “Frauenthemen und Frauenbewegung in der ‘Gartenlaube’”, p. 124.)

<sup>119</sup> Christina Hofmeister. “Die Diskussion der Frauenfrage in der Gartenlaube (1897-1905), in: Hempel. *Literatur und bürgerliche Frauenbewegung im Kaiserreich*, p. 130.



conceptual sophistication and/or social critique, and to what extent it served the need to confirm traditional values and morals by ‘towing the editorial line.’

### *The Kaiserreich as Social Context for Women: A Gender-Specific Overview*

When it comes to finding late nineteenth-century female authors who dealt actively with the new middle class, a certain dearth becomes apparent in respect of representations of female independence. The reasons for this dearth may be explicated briefly in an iteration of prevailing discourse parameters. The work of female authors cannot be appreciated in their historicity without adding a *gender-specific* overview of the era, to highlight, firstly, how symbolic cultural constructs operated, and secondly, how the consequent socio-historic conditions circumscribed the general publication environment. Luce Irigaray highlights the connection between physical and symbolic manifestations of power in her critique of Sigmund Freud’s treatises on female identity.<sup>120</sup>

Freud does not see two sexes whose differences are articulated in the act of intercourse, and, more generally speaking, in the imaginary and symbolic processes that regulate the workings of a society and a culture. The “feminine” is always described in terms of deficiency or atrophy, as the other side of the sex that alone holds a monopoly on value: the male sex.<sup>121</sup>

Irigaray rightly points not only to traditional constructions of masculinity as synonymous with substance, strength and autonomy, but to how these notions are defined by their opposites. That the definition of both embodied and symbolic femininity was overtly articulated in terms of inadequacy since at least the mid nineteenth century is readily apparent, not only from Freud’s formulations but from a variety of other commentators, whose thinking formed an epistemic circle of hostility around the creative efforts of

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<sup>120</sup> Freud published his treatises around the turn of century. (Cf. for instance, Sigmund Freud. *Die Traumdeutung*. Leipzig/Vienna: F. Deuticke, [1899].)

<sup>121</sup> Luce Irigaray. (Catherine Porter transl.) *This Sex Which is Not One*. Ithaca/New York: Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 69.

women by the late nineteenth century. Pascal highlights that attacks on female intellectual prowess issued by cultural critics were widespread:

Schopenhauer's spiteful remarks were often quoted, Lagarde and Nietzsche expressed bluntly, even brutally, their contempt for the intellectual and moral claims of women, and provided the stock arguments for a host of articles and essays that demonstrated the unsuitability of women for higher education, independent careers and posts of responsibility.<sup>122</sup>

Such derogatory opinions found endorsement in the medical profession, which sought to substantiate the symbolic polarisation on the grounds of biology:

Otto Weininger summed up these arguments in [...] *Geschlecht und Charakter* (1903). [...] He proves (he was twenty-three years old) that the biological function determines the female psyche, they are either mothers or whores; they are not only devoid of genius and unable to understand what truth and freedom mean, but also incapable of love and truly moral feelings.<sup>123</sup>

Additionally, gender prejudice was echoed by misogynistic literary groups, such as the George Circle, who referred to "die gottlose progressive Frau" in *Jahrbuch für die geistige Bewegung*,<sup>124</sup> while negative portrayals of emancipated women in avant-garde drama and narrative fiction contributed insidiously to the derogation of women.<sup>125</sup> Positioned as other than the norm,<sup>126</sup> femininity, in practice, was acceptable so long as it was derivative and dependent. One particular interest for this study will therefore be how, to what effect, and with what results, women are depicted by female authors, since these depictions are in effect negotiations – constituting either acts of resistance, conformity, or a mixture of both.

The socio-historic situation illustrates the effects of the above outlined discourse parameters. Ute Frevert views Immanuel Kant's ruminations on gender characteristics in 1798 as a basis which served subsequent authors' efforts to script femininity:

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<sup>122</sup> Roy Pascal. *From Naturalism to Expressionism. German Literature and Society 1880 – 1918*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973, p. 204.

<sup>123</sup> Pascal, *From Naturalism to Expressionism*, p. 204.

<sup>124</sup> Quoted in Pascal, *From Naturalism to Expressionism*, p. 210.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. for instance, Frank Wedekind *Kinder und Narren*. Munich: R. Warth, 1891; Hermann Sudermann. *Sodoms Ende* Berlin: Lehmann, 1891; Max Halbe. *Mutter Erde*. Berlin: G. Bondi, 1898; Wilhelm Bölsche. *Die Mittagsgöttin*. Jena: E. Diederichs, 1891.

<sup>126</sup> The polarity "same/other" is summarised in *This Sex Which is Not One* as "a related tendency in Western discourse which privileges masculine 'sameness-onto-itself' as the basis of signification and identity and in consequence posits feminine as *other* only in relation to masculine sameness, that is, not as a different mode of signification." (Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One*, p. 221.)

Nachfolgende Dichter und Denker machten sich voll Eifer daran, das Typisch-Weibliche zum Ewig-Weiblichen zu stilisieren und in einen unverrückbaren Gegensatz zum männlichen Geschlechtscharakter zu stellen.<sup>127</sup>

The result was formulations across Wilhelmine society of idealised feminine attributes, such as “Passivität, Bescheidenheit, Fleiß, Güte, Anpassung, Emotionalität, Rezeptivität [...] Tugendhaftigkeit”.<sup>128</sup> Educational goals of “höhere Töcherschulen” came to be “Häuslichkeit und Mütterlichkeit”<sup>129</sup> – premises also disseminated by exponents of the nineteenth-century *Frauenbewegung*.<sup>130</sup> Femininity, therefore, consisted of manageable, purely adaptive attributes and was positive so long as it continued to be defined by male interests. But as Frevert points out, the production of such ideals was not only divergent from the social reality of the majority, it was also the root cause of the vilification of independent women:

Natürlich konnte dieses ideale Frauenbild nur für einen äußerst kleinen Bevölkerungsteil Realität werden; am reinsten verwirklichte es sich in Beamtenhaushalten, in denen die Grundbedingungen der Familienwirtschaft: Erwerbsgemeinschaft von Mann und Frau, untrennbare Einheit von ‘Betrieb und Haushalt’, vollständig aufgehoben waren.

Die ländliche Bevölkerung lebte weiterhin in der [...] ‘Sozialform des ganzen Hauses’[...] ihre Wirtschaftsform [...] beruhte auf der gemeinsamen, keiner geschlechtsspezifischen Arbeitsteilung gehorchenden Arbeitsleistung der ganzen Familie. Auch die Haushalte der selbständigen Handwerker und kleinen Gewerbetreibenden in den Städten konnten es sich nicht leisten, ihre Frauen für den schönggeistigen Müßiggang freizustellen, von den Familien der lohnabhängigen Arbeitern ganz zu schweigen. Gerade angesichts dieser offensichtlichen Diskrepanz zwischen Frauennorm und Frauenwirklichkeit überrascht der durchschlagende und bis heute anhaltende Erfolg dieses Entwurfs idealer Weiblichkeit [...]. Die Festschreibung der Frau auf ihren ‘Geschlechtscharakter’ als Hausfrau und Mutter unter Strafe öffentlicher Verachtung und Schmähung als ‘emancipirtes Weib’ eroberte [...] jedes soziale Milieu in einer vereinten Kraftanstrengung der Sozialisationsagenturen Familie, Schule und Öffentlichkeit.<sup>131</sup>

Carole Adams cites an account of such vilification, which was aimed at female

*Angestellte* and includes the collusion of women:

Middle-class women, even those working from economic necessity, found that their old friends no longer acknowledged them, and it could be difficult to find new

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<sup>127</sup> Ute Frevert, “Vom Klavier zur Schreibmaschine – Weiblicher Arbeitsmarkt und Rollenzuweisungen am Beispiel der weiblichen *Angestellten* in der Weimarer Republik”, in: Annette Kuhn/Gerhard Schneider (eds.) *Frauen in der Geschichte*. Düsseldorf: Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann, 1970, p. 82.

<sup>128</sup> Frevert, “Vom Klavier zur Schreibmaschine”, pp. 83-4.

<sup>129</sup> Frevert, “Vom Klavier zur Schreibmaschine”, pp. 83-4.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. for instance, Margrit Twellmann. “Die deutsche Frauenbewegung. Ihre Anfänge und erste Entwicklung 1843 – 1889”, in: *Marburger Abhandlungen zur politischen Wissenschaft*, Vol. 17/2. Meisenheim: A. Hain, 1972, p. 94.

<sup>131</sup> Frevert, “Vom Klavier zur Schreibmaschine”, p. 84.

friends who were social peers. Merely appearing in public, out of the shelter of home and the protection of male relatives, could provoke sexual harassment. One female clerk complained that 'nowhere is a lady totally secure from serious badgering. In the street, on the electric tram, everywhere, she is exposed to it.'<sup>132</sup>

Hans-Ulrich Wehler corroborates Frevert's and Adam's exposure of a vehemently represented, yet artificial conceptual situation by enumerating middle class sections of Wilhelmine society:

Die Großbourgeoisie und die höchsten bildungsbürgerlichen Berufsklassen brachten es zusammen auf ganze zwei Prozent, einschließlich der oberen Mittelklassen ergibt sich ein bürgerlicher Anteil von fünf bis sechs Prozent der Bevölkerung. Addiert man dazu das äußerst diffuse Kleinbürgertum, das in der Sprache der Zeitgenossen vornehmlich in den alten und den neuen Mittelstand zerfiel, kommen noch einmal acht bis neun Prozent hinzu.<sup>133</sup>

A majority of the population, who thus could not realise the demands of the ideal, was therefore ignored or – more or less subconsciously – denigrated. Frevert finds the fact that an ideal constructed by a minority became a ubiquitous, value-laden perception throughout Wilhelmine society “verblüffend” and “überraschend”.<sup>134</sup> It would certainly have affected the portrayal of female *Angestellte* by female authors of popular fiction: insofar as independent women were perceived as emancipated, they were, as Adams points out, also generally viewed as somehow indecent,<sup>135</sup> to present a social status quo that would have been difficult to oppose.

Early examples of narratives by female authors which depict the white-collar milieu, and either women's relationship to, or function within it, therefore, have a particular relevance for this study. Interest in this theme is amplified by the fact that no comparative study has come to my attention while researching the history of

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<sup>132</sup> Carole Elizabeth Adams. *Women Clerks in Wilhelmine Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 26.

<sup>133</sup> Hans-Ulrich Wehler. *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte. Von der 'Deutschen Doppelrevolution' bis zum Beginn des Ersten Weltkrieges 1849 – 1914*, Vol. 3. Munich: C.H. Beck, 1995, p. 763.

<sup>134</sup> Frevert, “Vom Klavier zur Schreibmaschine”, p. 84.

<sup>135</sup> As an example of a highly ambivalent male attitude in respect of gender, Heinrich Reth's memoirs may be mentioned. They testify to the incompetence of some newly employed female typists on the one hand, and to the high degree of competence and tenacity of the daughter of a deceased entrepreneur, who is interpreted to have inherited his business acumen, on the other. This narrative suggests that while female competence is a possibility, it is nevertheless the exception. Further, Reth's observations about female intellectualism are uncomplimentary. (Cf. Heinrich Reth. *Noch ist die blühende, goldene Zeit. Aus den Wanderjahren eines jungen Kaufmanns*. Leipzig: Xenien, 1912.)

*Angestellte*.<sup>136</sup> It is not the only concern, however. As previously highlighted, the *Kaiserreich* was a phase during which epistemological shifts caused deep-rooted anxieties across society underneath the – arguably compensatory – highly visible surface bravado.<sup>137</sup> I view Brinker-Gabler’s extension of Nietzsche’s phrase, her observation that an “Umwertung der Werte wie die Aufwertung alter Werte” was taking place, as the psychological axis of the era. Among the most-read literary categories at that time, two conceptually opposed genres notably reflect this axis – the *Sozialroman* on the one hand, and *Heimatliteratur* on the other. An exponent of each was therefore ultimately chosen, in addition to the criteria that they were women, published narratives in *Die Gartenlaube* as well as independently appearing texts, and, as already noted, that they specifically included the white-collar milieu in their work.

#### Further Methodological Considerations

Two discrete methodological approaches will inform the readings of the case study texts. The first concerns the Foucaultian notion of “resistant practice”, as developed in Josephine Donovan’s treatise on narratives with a regional focus.<sup>138</sup> It will be elucidated here partly because this type of narrative also features in my enquiry, where I build on her work by looking more closely at the late nineteenth-century German context. Additionally, Foucault’s aim to achieve a “reactivation of local knowledges – of minor knowledges [...] – in opposition to the scientific hierarchisation of knowledges” through an “analysis of local discursivities”,<sup>139</sup> which Donovan brings to bear in her study, is a project that is potentially relevant also to other types of writing: it applies generally to

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<sup>136</sup> Josef Witsch’s study is concerned with the Weimar Republic, as previously highlighted.

<sup>137</sup> Prevailing attitudes and militaristic as well as colonial ambitions, issuing from the Imperial Court are here implied. Detailed socio-historic discussions will be taken up in the case of the case studies themselves.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. for instance, Josephine Donovan. *European Local-Color Literature. National Tales, Dorfgeschichten, Romans Champêtres*. New York: Continuum, 2010, pp. xi-xiii, 1-21.

<sup>139</sup> Michel Foucault. *Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. (Colin Gordon, transl.). Edited by Colin Gordon. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980, p. 85.

texts that have been “first disqualified and then ignored” within a given “theoretical-political *avant garde*”,<sup>140</sup> and which, by virtue of being “enthroned” in educational institutions, diminishes those “subjects of experience and knowledge”<sup>141</sup> that do not conform to the prevalent discourse. To explicate the term “discourse”, a difficult but central tenet of Foucault’s approach, Paul Bové points out that to ask “what is discourse? Or, What does discourse mean?” is itself to pose “essentialist, defining questions” that cannot be asked of this phenomenon.<sup>142</sup> Instead, Bové examines the functions of discourse as power and control: in addition to repression and exclusion, it operates through “positive production”; it is the “‘self-evident’ and ‘commonsensical’” that claims “the privilege of unnoticed power [...] a kind of power that generates certain kinds of questions, placed within systems that legitimate, support, and answer those questions.”<sup>143</sup> Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno preceded Foucault by viewing the

rationalizing process as a form of dominance. Transforming the world of nature ‘into mere objectivity’, the Cartesian paradigm effects ‘the extirpation of animism’. Its practices, as seen in the scientific method, are dictatorial and manipulative. It requires the ‘subdual of difference, particularities’. In the impartiality of scientific knowledge, ‘that which is powerless has wholly lost any means of expression’.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, p. 85.

<sup>141</sup> Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, pp. 85, 86.

<sup>142</sup> Paul A. Bové. “Discourse”, in: Frank Lentricchia/Thomas McLaughlin, (eds.). *Critical Terms for Literary Study*. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1995, p. 53.

<sup>143</sup> Bové. “Discourse”, p. 54.

<sup>144</sup> Horkheimer and Adorno, quoted in: Donovan, *European Local-Color Literature*, p. xii. – Ruth Whittle’s observations resonate with those here outlined and focus specifically on late nineteenth-century German society: “The time post 1872 is a period where the subjects of History and the Natural Sciences became established disciplines and [...] dominant subjects in the university. If German Studies (‘Neudeutsche Philologie’) wanted to compete successfully with these subjects, it, too, needed to demonstrate its usefulness both to the institution of the university and the Nation. The proof of ‘Sozialbezug’ and ‘Nützlichkeit’ could be delivered by tying the subject closely to the official national discourses of the time. That is what other subjects had done, especially History and the Natural Sciences. Now it was time for German philology to embrace it wholeheartedly. One of its key proponents, Wilhelm Scherer, expressed boundless hope that importing scientific methods into philological thinking would bring real progress to the discipline as well as to German cultural life.” (Ruth Whittle. *Gender, Canon and Literary History. The Changing Place of Nineteenth-Century German Women Writers (1835-1918)*. Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2013, pp. 18-9.) Whittle’s exposition attributes the process of “instrumentalization”, or ideologisation, which is often applied to *Heimatliteratur* theoreticians due to their specific formulations, at the level of discourse, implicitly to demonstrate not only the ubiquity, but also the transferability of such a conceptual situation. Where the dominant discourse posits competition (and hence power) as norms, adaptive positions occur on the part of peripheralised voices which continue to have a stake in existing power relations. The fallacy both of “Sozialbezug” and of “Nützlichkeit” becomes particularly clear in Whittle’s further observations about Scherer, whose use of language equates progress with power: “Whilst one might say that Scherer was the victim of a terrible illusion, he was certainly not alone in holding it. There are two particular concerns however: first, there is Scherer’s conviction – love it or loathe it – that the principles from the natural sciences are superior to any other principles and will therefore remove traditional dogmatic principles in all of the academic disciplines; second, within the discourses of culture and nationhood, the discourses of literature have become ones of power and dominance” (cf. Whittle, *Gender, Canon and Literary History*, p. 19).

Applied to my study, “resistant practice” means the presence of alternatives to the “totalizing ordering of things”<sup>145</sup> in the chosen narratives. Donovan highlights the contemporary significance of such an approach:

As rationalist, deductive thought-processes are held to be superior in modernity, local knowledges or *mētis* are derogated as regressive and unsophisticated and are overruled by the referees of modernity as such whenever the two modes clash or interact. (In recent years postmodernist theory has moved toward revalidating narrative as an important form of knowledge but the dominant institutions of modernity – science, medicine, law – still relegate it to secondary, ‘anecdotal’ status.)<sup>146</sup>

My purpose in applying the concept of resistant practice is firstly, to assert the significance of narrative as an important form of knowledge, and secondly, to explore and “affirm the validity of *mētis* or at least [to] recognise the significance of its clash with the knowledges of modernity”.<sup>147</sup> It serves to illuminate not only the relevance of textual and subtextual fictional responses to late nineteenth-century manifestations such as nationalistic ideals, militaristic notions of power, burgeoning consumerism and the propagation of fixed gender ideals. The approach also prompts an exploration of those underlying attitudes and assumptions that either enable or compromise *mētis* in the narratives in question.

To achieve the necessary focus for the present purpose, this investigation is limited to an exploration of texts by two authors. In this, it concurs with Esther Kilchmann’s approach in her study of mid nineteenth-century resistant narratives:

Erforderlich war zur Bearbeitung [...] eine Konzentration auf die Mikroperspektive und eine durchgängige Herausarbeitung von Mehrdeutigkeiten. Ein solches Vorgehen kann *per se* keine umfassende Überblicksdarstellung und keine abschließenden allgemeingültigen Befunde hervorbringen, vielmehr wird angestrebt, scheinbar Festgefühtes in neuem Lichte erscheinen zu lassen.<sup>148</sup>

This aim, to allow ostensibly entrenched understandings to appear in a new light, is in my study aided by a second methodological approach that has the capacity to

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<sup>145</sup> Hubert L. Dreyfus/Paul Rabinow. *Michel Foucault. Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, p. 201.

<sup>146</sup> Donovan, *Local-Color Literature*, p. 7.

<sup>147</sup> Donovan, *Local-Color Literature*, p. 7.

<sup>148</sup> Esther Kilchmann. *Verwerfungen in der Einheit. Geschichten von Nation und Familie um 1840*. Munich: Fink, 2009, p. 8.

empower alternative readings and what Kilchmann terms the “Herausarbeitung von Mehrdeutigkeiten”. This second approach consists in consulting perspectives put forward by Carl Gustav Jung. Jung, like Horkheimer and Adorno, preceded Foucault’s critique by several decades. His phrase “the spirit of the age”<sup>149</sup> describes effects identical to what has since been described as the functions of discourse. In discussing them, Jung brings to bear standpoints that differ profoundly from those of his high-profile contemporary Sigmund Freud.<sup>150</sup> Himself positioned on the edge of the dominant discourse, Jung highlights both the historicity and consequences of scientific materialism:

The fact that a metaphysics of the mind was supplanted in the nineteenth century by a metaphysics of matter, is a mere trick if we consider it as a question for the intellect; yet regarded from the standpoint of psychology, it is an unexampled revolution in man’s outlook upon the world. Other-worldliness is converted into matter-of-factness; empirical boundaries are set to man’s discussion of every problem, to his choice of purposes, and even to what he calls ‘meaning’. Intangible, inner happenings seem to have to yield to things in the external world, and no value exists if it is not founded on a so-called fact. [...] It is futile, indeed, to attempt to treat this unreasoned change of opinion as a question of philosophy. We had better not try to do this, for if we maintain that mental phenomena arise from the activity of the glands, we are sure of the thanks and respect of our contemporaries, whereas if we explain the break-up of the atom in the sun as an emanation of the

<sup>149</sup> Carl Gustav Jung. (Cary F. Baynes transl.). *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. London: Routledge, 1990, pp. 202-3.

<sup>150</sup> In *Madness and Civilisation*, Foucault refers to psychiatric practice as a “moral tactic contemporary with the end of the eighteenth century” which is “overlaid by the myths of positivism”. His criticism of “psychiatric practice” and its “profound structures of objectivity” refers to “the knowledge and practice of nineteenth century psychiatry from Pinel to Freud”, rather than to Jung’s phenomenologically based approach, which does not similarly lend itself to reification. (Cf. Michel Foucault. [Richard Howard transl.]. *Madness and Civilisation. A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. New York: Vintage/Random House, 1973, p. 276.) – Joseph Henderson highlights the contrast between Freud and Jung by showing how Freud’s contribution, while historically valuable, ultimately involved a polarised attitude invested in disputing and claiming authority: “As long as psychology was only ‘pragmatic’, it was identical with a belief in the primary nature of the conscious will. Freud’s contribution changed all this and his followers were convinced of the primary nature of the unconscious, which quickly created a viewpoint in conflict with the previous one. Jung introduced a principle of relativity into this apparent opposition and reformulated both tendencies as a reversible complementarity between the conscious and the unconscious, which he felt was inherent in all psychic functioning.” (Joseph L. Henderson. *Cultural Attitudes in Psychological Perspective*. Toronto: Inner City Books, 1984, pp. 10-11.) Christopher Hauke highlights an important similarity between Foucault and Jung: “In the manner of [...] Foucault, Jung reveals a clear anti-absolutism: ‘The statistical method shows the facts in the light of the ideal average but does not give us a picture of their empirical reality. While reflecting an indisputable aspect of reality, it can falsify the actual truth in a most misleading way. This is particularly true of theories that are based on statistics. The distinctive thing about real facts, however, is their individuality. Not to put too fine a point on it, one could say that the real picture consists of nothing but exceptions to the rule, and that, in consequence, absolute reality has predominantly the character of irregularity.’ Jung’s warning about the ‘doctor’ compares with Foucault’s [...] critique of the traditional historian who wishes to encourage thorough understanding, to exclude qualitative judgements and to create a comprehensive view excluding differences, in summary, ‘His apparent serenity follows from his concerted avoidance of the exceptional and his reduction of all things to the lowest common denominator.’ (Jung and Foucault, quoted in: Christopher Hauke. *Jung and the Postmodern. The Interpretation of Realities*. London/Philadelphia: Routledge, 2000, p. 165. – For further observations on the differences between Freud and Jung, cf. for instance, Carl Gustav Jung, “Freud and Jung – Contrasts”, in: Jung, *Modern Man*, pp. 132-142; Anthony Storr/Anthony Stevens. *Freud & Jung. A Dual Introduction*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1998.)



creative *Weltgeist*, we shall be looked upon as intellectual freaks. And yet both views are equally logical, equally metaphysical, equally arbitrary and equally symbolic. [...] But we know how ill Professor Daqué fared in his academic career because of his sin against the spirit of the age, which will not let itself be trifled with.<sup>151</sup>

Marie-Louise von Franz elaborates on Jung's standpoint:

Jung rejected a materialistic derivation of psychic phenomena, for the fundamental reason that we do not know what 'matter' is, just as we also do not know what the 'objective psyche' is, nor what 'spirit' is. Both can be described only indirectly, by means of the traces they leave in our conscious minds, but they cannot be defined in themselves.<sup>152</sup>

Approaching the phenomenon of discourse from a depth-psychological perspective<sup>153</sup>

allows Jung to focus on the essentially irrational way in which discourse functions:

It is a religion, or – even more – a creed which has absolutely no connection with reason, but whose significance lies in the unpleasant fact that it is taken as the absolute measure of all truth and is supposed always to have common-sense upon its side. The spirit of the age cannot be compassed by the process of human reason. It is an inclination, an emotional tendency that works upon weaker minds, through the unconscious, with an overwhelming force of suggestion that carries them along with it. To think otherwise than our contemporaries think is somehow illegitimate and disturbing; it is even indecent, morbid or blasphemous, and therefore socially dangerous for the individual. [...] Just as formerly the assumption was unquestionable that everything that exists takes its rise from the creative will of a God who is spirit, so the nineteenth century discovered the equally unquestionable truth that everything arises from material causes. Today the psyche does not build itself a body, but on the contrary, matter, by chemical action, produces the psyche. [...] It is the popular way of thinking, and therefore it is decent, reasonable, scientific and normal. Mind must be thought to be an epiphenomenon of matter.<sup>154</sup>

In asking whether my chosen narratives are able to resist the psychological conformity which Jung describes, the ways in which the case study authors deal with religion, and their religious attitudes themselves become particularly relevant. Questions here include, on the one hand, whether they are able to resist an implicit acceptance of the

<sup>151</sup> Jung, *Modern Man*, pp. 200-7, here p. 202.

<sup>152</sup> Marie-Louise von Franz. *C.G. Jung. His Myth in Our Time*. Toronto: Inner City Books, 1998, pp. 57-8. – Jung himself articulates this issue in *Structures and Dynamics of the Psyche*: "Matter and spirit both appear in the psychic realm as distinctive qualities of conscious contents. The ultimate nature of both is [...] irrepresentable, since the psyche and its contents are the only reality which is given to us without a medium." (Carl Gustav Jung. [Gerhard Adler transl.]. *Collected Works. Structures and Dynamics of the Psyche*. Vol. 8. New York: Pantheon Books, 1991, par. 420.)

<sup>153</sup> The term "depth-psychological" is in this study taken to refer to Jung's phenomenologically based psychological approach, which refers not only to behaviour but also to consciousness, and which observes the psyche and the unconscious in its personal and collective dimensions as actualities. (For a detailed discussion, cf. Carl Gustav Jung (ed.). "Approaching the Unconscious", in: *Man and his Symbols*. London: Picador, 1978, pp. 94ff. For a discussion of Jung's proximity to phenomenology, cf. Roger Brookes. *Jung and Phenomenology*. London/New York: Routledge, 1991.)

<sup>154</sup> Jung, *Modern Man*, pp. 202-3.

“extirpation of animism”,<sup>155</sup> and on the other, whether, and to what effect, they seek refuge in established Christian doctrine.

The idea of narrative as consciousness processes, which has already been alluded to, is a phenomenological proposition that does not seek to explain experience, and therefore, the significance of narrative according to any given theoretical position.<sup>156</sup> As previously highlighted, Jung’s observations about literature include the perception of the unconscious with a collective as well as a personal dimension. Since this viewpoint underpins my intended approach, it will be useful to enlarge on this concept and briefly to introduce some of the contingent concepts that will appear more fully in the context of the case study narratives. Jung proposes a “principle of growth toward wholeness [...] that necessarily involves a creative relationship between the dark instinctive side of man’s nature and the light of consciousness.”<sup>157</sup> Contrary to Freud, according to whose

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<sup>155</sup> Max Horkheimer/Theodor Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. New York: Continuum, 1944, p. 5.

<sup>156</sup> For a list of theories about narrative, cf. for instance, Hillis Miller. “Narrative”, in: Lentricchia/McLaughlin, *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, p. 67). It should be pointed out that the use of the term “phenomenological theories” in her list is misleading. Roger Brookes highlights that “phenomenology is primarily and thoroughly descriptive. [...] Theoretical and scientific hypotheses and accounts are distrusted, even if – or especially if – they have come to be generally accepted as the unquestioned prejudices of the community at large. Reality as it is present within lived experience is the mistress to whom the phenomenologist promises to remain faithful at all times.” (Brookes, *Jung and Phenomenology*, p. 31.)

<sup>157</sup> Robert Avens. “The Image of the Devil in C.G. Jung’s Psychology”, in: *Journal of Religion and Health*. Vol 16, No. 3 (Jul. 1977), p. 205. – The implications of Jung’s ideas on how narrative is perceived are profound. They counter critical viewpoints about its significance that deem it to be only or ultimately ideological in function (cf. for instance, Miller, “Narrative”, p. 72, Monika Fludernik. [Patricia Häusler-Greenfield/Monika Fludernik, transl.] *An Introduction to Narratology*. London/New York: Routledge, 2009, pp. 1-2), by positing that authorial inspiration can be derived both from the external world and directly from an unconscious that is not a mere repository of repressed contents, such as memories and wishes which themselves originate in external experience. A detailed exposition of the differences of perspective between these positions is outside the scope of this study, which largely focuses on authors and texts that overtly engage with societal developments. However, because interpretations of this engagement can also differ from interpretations derived in the absence of the acknowledgement of the psyche and the “reversible complementarity between the conscious and the unconscious” (Henderson, *Cultural Attitudes*, p. 11), the accounts of two authors about their own creative processes will be offered to bear out the difference of perspective at least briefly. The first is that of Hermann Hesse, who finds that “eine Dichtung beginnt für mich in dem Augenblick zu entstehen, wo eine Figur mir sichtbar wird, welche für eine Weile Symbol und Träger meines Erlebens, meiner Gedanken, meiner Probleme werden kann. Die Erscheinung dieser mythischen Person (Peter Camenzind, Knulp, Demian, Siddhartha, Harry Haller usw.) ist der schöpferische Augenblick, in dem alles entsteht. Beinahe alle Prosadichtungen die ich geschrieben habe, sind Seelendichtungen, in allen handelt es sich nicht um Geschichten, Verwicklungen und Spannungen; sie sind im Grunde Monologe, in denen eine einzige Person, eben jene mythische Figur, in ihren Beziehungen zur Welt und zum eigenen Ich betrachtet wird. [...] Das gesamte Material, die gesamte Masse an Erlebnis und an Gedachtem, die das entstehende Buch auf eine Formel zu bringen sucht, ist in dieser Zeit (und die Zeit dauert nicht lange!) im Zustande des Flusses, der Schmelzbarkeit – jetzt oder nie muß das Material gefaßt und in die Form gebracht werden, sonst ist es zu spät. Bei jedem meiner Bücher hat es eine solche Zeit gegeben, auch bei den niemals fertig gewordenen und niemals gedruckten. Bei ihnen habe ich die Erntezeit verpaßt, und es kam plötzlich der Augenblick, wo Figur und Problem meiner Dichtung anfang mir ferner zu rücken und an Dringlichkeit und Wichtigkeit zu verlieren [...]” (Hermann

“system the ‘well being’ is defined chiefly in terms of [...] ‘the capacity for full genital functioning, or from a different angle, as the awareness of the hidden Oedipal situation’”,<sup>158</sup> Jung found these definitions only tangential to the real problem of human existence. According to him, the unconscious is a natural, if potent and ambivalent complement of conscious awareness, rather than a mere repository of repressed urges. Thus compensatory impulses tend towards the development of an individualised, rather than collectively-referenced consciousness. Rather than merely serving unconscious wish fulfilment, the human psyche functions as a

self-regulating system in which a compensatory mechanism operates between the conscious and the unconscious parts. [...] It means that every one-sided attitude inevitably produces its opposite in an autonomous attempt to restore a balanced attitude.<sup>159</sup>

This view of compensation acknowledges the potential of dissociation between the conscious mind and the unconscious, including schizoid manifestations in the individual or collective psyche that create *otherness*, a crucial phenomenon which Jung termed the “shadow”. The concept of the shadow is particularly useful to a reading of late

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Hesse. *Gesammelte Schriften. Betrachtungen und Briefe*. Vol. 7. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1957, p. 303.) Hesse’s description of his creative process clearly shows a direct relationship to a symbol-forming unconscious, which is still more fully expressed by his “mythische Figur” Demian: “Wir sehen die Grenze zwischen uns und der Natur zittern und zerfließen und lernen die Stimmung kennen, in der wir nicht wissen, ob die Bilder auf unserer Netzhaut von äußeren Eindrücken stammen oder von inneren. Nirgends so einfach und leicht wie bei dieser Übung machen wir die Entdeckung, wie sehr wir Schöpfer sind, wie sehr unsere Seele immerzu teilhat an der beständigen Erschaffung der Welt. Vielmehr ist es dieselbe unteilbare Gottheit, die in uns und die in der Natur tätig ist, und wenn die äußere Welt unterginge, so wäre einer von uns fähig, sie wieder aufzubauen, denn Berg und Strom, Baum und Blatt, Wurzel und Blüte, alles Gebildete in der Natur liegt in uns vorgebildet, stammt aus der Seele, deren Wesen Ewigkeit ist, deren Wesen wir nicht kennen, das sich uns aber zumeist als Liebeskraft und Schöpferkraft zu fühlen gibt. (Hermann Hesse. *Gesammelte Werke. Demian. Die Geschichte von Emil Sinclairs Jugend*. Berlin: Suhrkamp, 1955, p. 147. [First publication: Berlin: Suhrkamp, 1919.]) The second account is that of English author and critic Virginia Woolf, who comments on similar experiences as does Hesse and who, like him, applies them to the process of autobiographical writing. She refers to exceptional experiences that may have no external source, as was the case with some of her earliest childhood experiences. Looking at a flower, she describes being suddenly aware of its wholeness, as well as its connectedness to a deeper life. According to Woolf, such a “moment of being” appears as “a blow from an enemy hidden behind the cotton wool of daily life; it is or will become a revelation of some order; it is a token of some real thing behind appearances; and I make it real by putting it into words. It is only by putting it into words that I make it whole.” (Cf. Virginia Woolf. *Moments of Being*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984, p. 80.) Miller’s notion that there is a necessity to choose between the assumption that fiction creates – in other words, is performative – or reveals, because the two are mutually exclusive, is undermined in these accounts. Jung echoes the experience related by Hesse and Woolf in his assertion that “it is not Goethe who creates *Faust*, but *Faust* which creates Goethe. And what is *Faust* but a symbol? By this I do not mean an allegory that points to something all too familiar, but an expression that stands for something not clearly known and yet profoundly alive.” (Jung, *Modern Man*, p. 197.) The idea of the performativity of narrative, in the sense that Hesse and Woolf apply it, implies a ‘real world’ that is not in fact real but composed of appearances, while “a way of doing things with words” (Miller, “Narrative”, p. 69) also becomes a revelation. Thus revelation and invention become paradoxically symbiotic in narrative when this is perceived in the light of Jung’s notion of the unconscious.

<sup>158</sup> Freud, quoted in: Avens, “The Image of the Devil”, p. 198.

<sup>159</sup> Avens, “The Image of the Devil”, p. 198.

nineteenth-century European societies, where not only collective vying for superiority, but also the scapegoating and repression of marginalised groups was a pervasive phenomenon, as already discussed. The interest in consciousness processes, further, leads to Jung's concept of "consciousness functions",<sup>160</sup> which provides a useful vocabulary for questioning whether alternatives to a habitual collective attitude are possible, what the difference might mean, and whether any such difference presents itself in marginalised texts authored by women. To explore the gendered perspective, this concept will additionally be employed to elucidate whether, and how, alternatives to stereotypical gender roles are envisaged in the narratives. Lastly, explorations in the case study texts of the psychological effects of patriarchal social norms on women are approached via a depth-psychological articulation of the way in which the consequences of unrealised personal potential are depicted. These concepts will be explored more fully in the context of the readings of the texts themselves.

### Case Study 1: Charlotte Niese, the Heimatdichterin – Profile of an Author and a Genre

As previously outlined, the chosen authors reflect what I term the psychological axis of late nineteenth-century Germany: that of a simultaneous "Umwertung" and "Aufwertung alter Werte",<sup>161</sup> respectively through the *Sozialroman* and *Heimatkunst* narratives.

Charlotte Niese was chosen as the *Heimatkunst* exponent. She was born into a pastor's family on Fehmarn, an island in the Baltic sea off the coast of Schleswig-Holstein. It was part of the Duchy of Schleswig and therefore under Danish rule until 1867, when it became subject to Prussian administration. Niese's birth-year is variously

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<sup>160</sup> The use of the term consciousness function is clarified by James Hillman: "Jung uses the terms functions and organs rather as one does in physiology: an organ performs the functions specific to it. But Jung also insists that a function precedes its organ [...] we develop a characteristic structure through habitual performance. [...] Because functions can be conceived in this developmental way, they are appropriately conceived in Jung's psychology as the functions of consciousness. They belong to the development of the conscious personality, forming part of the ego, its consistency, its habit, unity and memory, its characteristic way of performing. (Marie-Louise von Franz/James Hillman. *Jung's Typology*. New York: Spring Publications, 1971, p. 75.)

<sup>161</sup> Brinker-Gabler, "Zwischen Tradition und Moderne", p. 169.

given as either 1851 or 1854;<sup>162</sup> she was the fourth of nine children and grew up as the only daughter.<sup>163</sup> Her autobiographical sketches *Aus dänischer Zeit*<sup>164</sup> chronicle events, not only of a remarkably free-spirited childhood in a unique environment, but also of political conflicts that impinged on this borderland. Her family was a prominent one, due to her father's role as pastor, and her grandfather's role as *Justizrat*:

Kamen zu dem Vater viele Glieder der Gemeinde, um sich von ihm beraten zu lassen, so erschienen beim Großvater erst recht viele Besucher, Bauern, denen er mit Rat und Tat zur Seite stand. Auf diese Weise ist Charlotte Niese früh mit den verschiedensten Menschen in Berührung getreten und hat Blicke in Menschenschicksale thun dürfen, wie es nicht allzuhäufig vorkommt.<sup>165</sup>

As a young adult, she worked as governess in private households and later undertook a formal teaching qualification, to enter a profession enumerated as a type of *Angestellte*,<sup>166</sup> but eventually left teaching in order to help with her mother's business, which also marks the point at which she began to write.<sup>167</sup> Niese settled for good in Altona in 1888.

The narratives here chosen as case studies were published between 1892 and 1914; they therefore include examples of both her early and mature work. Among these, autobiographical sketches from the volume *Aus dänischer Zeit*,<sup>168</sup> which appeared between 1892 and 1894, may perhaps be termed *Heimatliteratur* proper, as may the

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<sup>162</sup> Kammerhof, a biographer of Niese, gives it as 1854. (Cf. Erich Kammerhof. "Charlotte Niese", in: Hermann Graef (ed.). *Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte*. [Vol. 67, Rudolf Eichler (ed.).] Leipzig: Verlag für Literatur, Kunst und Musik, 1910, p. 12.) – It is far more likely, however, to have been 1851, for reasons explained in "Autobiography and Heimatliteratur", p. 91, footnote 53.

<sup>163</sup> A sister did eventually appear as the ninth child of the Niese family, but this occurred when the author no longer lived in the family home and her elder brothers, likewise, had already left. (Cf. Charlotte Niese. *Von gestern und vorgestern. Lebenserinnerungen von Charlotte Niese*. Leipzig: Grunow, p. 139.) Her formative experiences therefore are of a predominantly male familial environment.

<sup>164</sup> Cf. Charlotte Niese. *Aus dänischer Zeit*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1894.

<sup>165</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", p. 12.

<sup>166</sup> Niese's autobiography provides several insights into conditions that presented hindrances in respect of young women's efforts towards independence. In respect of available opportunities, she notes: "damals gab es noch nicht viele angestellte Lehrerinnen. Wer unterrichten wollte, mußte als Gouvernante in eine Familie gehen. Diese Familien hatten meistens auch nicht allzuviel Ahnung von einem regelrechten Unterricht. Hauptwert wurde auf Französisch und Musik gelegt." When she studies as a young adult at a "französischen Lehranstalt", she finds that these institutions for girls "machten es sich sehr leicht. Man hatte wohl hier und dort einen guten Lehrer, aber im ganzen war die hier ausgeteilte Bildung außerordentlich oberflächlich" (Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, pp. 166-7), for which reason she later undertakes the Prussian "Examen für höhere Töchterschulen" (Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, pp. 184). This, however, does not lead to securing a position in a school, but to further positions as a governess.

<sup>167</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, pp. 188-9.

<sup>168</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Aus dänischer Zeit*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1894

novella *Gottes Wege*, which was first published in 1904.<sup>169</sup> A historical novella entitled *Das Lagerkind*,<sup>170</sup> published on the eve of the First World War, appeared as an independent volume in the then prestigious series of Mainzer Volks- und Jugendbücher. The novel *Licht und Schatten*,<sup>171</sup> published in 1895, on the other hand, though also regional in focus, resists clear-cut classification, as will be seen. It also features the white-collar milieu and *Angestellte* as protagonists and takes up the issue of female independence in sub-textual form.

Niese can fairly be described as a consummate story-teller in the narratives here presented; she handles narrative pace and interest all but flawlessly. *Licht und Schatten* is perhaps the most complex example of this skill, being of a larger scale, and challenging generic boundaries. A detailed profile of Charlotte Niese's work appeared in *Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte* in 1910. In the introduction to this profile, Ernst Kammerhof sets out to contextualise Niese's orientation and style:

Unsere Zeit steht im Zeichen der Heimatkunst, und wir freuen uns dessen; denn sie hat uns zurückgeführt zu den starken Wurzeln unserer Kraft. Sie mußte notwendig kommen nach einer Richtung, die unserer deutschen Literatur Vernichtung drohte, die nie der tiefste und wahrste Ausdruck der deutschen Volksseele gewesen sein kann. [...] Und wenn auch nicht zu leugnen ist, daß der Naturalismus befruchtend und befreiend auf die Heimatkunst gewirkt hat, so darf man sein negatives Verdienst, das darin besteht, die Heimatkunst geradezu heraufbeschworen zu haben, desto höher werten. Nicht nur die breiten Volksschichten, sondern auch die führenden Geister sehnten sich nach einer Befreiung, suchten nach freundlicheren Bildern, die das Leben doch immer noch bietet. So kam denn auf einmal eine Bewegung zum Durchbruch, die je länger je mehr an Boden gewann und heute die ganze Literatur beherrscht.<sup>172</sup>

Tensions between literatures orientated in "Umwertung" and "Aufwertung" are here clearly expressed. Literary naturalism, imported from France through the works of Emile Zola,<sup>173</sup> was an important impetus behind the German late nineteenth-century *Sozialroman*, the purpose of which was to question societal and conceptual norms. Kammerhof implicitly credits the narratorial detachment of naturalistic fictional works,

<sup>169</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Gottes Wege*. Hamburg: Verlag der Evangelischen Buchhandlung, 1904.

<sup>170</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Das Lagerkind*. Mainz: Mainzer Volks- und Jugendbücher, 1914.

<sup>171</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Licht und Schatten*. Leipzig: Fr. Wilh. Brunow, 1895.

<sup>172</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", pp. 7-8.

<sup>173</sup> For detailed examples of Zola reception, cf. for instance, Norbert Bachleitner. *Der englische und französische Sozialroman des 19. Jahrhunderts und seine Rezeption in Deutschland*. Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodolpi, 1993, pp. 324-345.

which had been derived from the positivistic method of observation,<sup>174</sup> as having acted “befruchtend und befreiend” on German literature. His objections concern both degree and import. Amoral depictions of human instinctual life and observations about the impact of the “pressures of the moment”<sup>175</sup> on character, where “the protagonist [...] [is] at the mercy of circumstances rather than of himself, indeed he often seems to have no self”,<sup>176</sup> had been a point of discussion in respect of their depressing effects since the publication of Zola’s novels.<sup>177</sup> Kammerhof therefore in effect summarises a commonly held perception: naturalism had already achieved whatever liberating effects it was going to have on German literature, and ‘enough was enough’. By exceeding its beneficial potential, it would only have negative effects, of which the reaction of writers and readers against it in the form of the *Heimatkunstbewegung* was a consequence to be applauded.

*Heimatkunst* was a popular movement, targetting a mass readership composed of the “städtische[n] Kleinbürgertum [...] dem auch die Autoren, meist Journalisten, Lehrer oder andere höhere Beamte und Angestellte, angehörten”,<sup>178</sup> and due to this demographic attained bestselling narratives. It has also, however, been viewed as a controversial phenomenon by posterity, and therefore requires some further explication. The term “Heimat” tended to be maligned, and the genre neglected by literary historians mindful that both had been subjected to political appropriations,

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<sup>174</sup> While Erich Ruprecht highlights that naturalist drama “in tiefem Erfassen der Motive auch die physiologische und pathologische Seite des Charakters zu beleuchten [...] sucht” (Erich Ruprecht (ed.) *Literarische Manifeste des Naturalismus 1880-1892*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1962, p. 68), Furst and Skrine observe that “to the Naturalists man is an animal whose course is determined by his heredity, by the effect of his environment and by the pressures of the moment [...]. Positivism is in fact an attempt to subject philosophy to the scientific method and to understand the universe in scientific terms.” (Lilian R. Furst/Peter N. Skrine. *Naturalism*. London: Methuen & Co., 1971, pp. 18-9.) In respect of the spearhead of Naturalism as a literary movement, they observe that “Zola readily acknowledged his debt to [Claude] Bernard, saying that the method Bernard had outlined for medicine was ideal for literature too and that he had needed merely to substitute the word ‘novelist’ for ‘doctor’. Nowhere is there a plainer statement of the analogy between the writer and the scientist.” (Furst/Skrine, *Naturalism*, p. 21.) – The publication referred to is Claude Bernard’s *Introduction to the Scientific Study of Medicine*. (Cf. Claude Bernard. *Introduction à l’étude de la médecine expérimentale*. Paris: J.B. Bailliere, [1865].)

<sup>175</sup> Furst/Skrine, *Naturalism*, p. 18

<sup>176</sup> Ricard Volney Chase. *The American Novel and its Tradition*. London: Bell, 1957, p. 199.

<sup>177</sup> Cf. for instance. Maximilian Harden. “Zola und sein Menschenvieh (1890)”, in: Manfred Brauneck/Christine Müller (eds.) *Naturalismus. Manifeste und Dokumente zur deutschen Literatur 1880-1900*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1987, p. 702.

<sup>178</sup> Peter Zimmermann. “Heimatkunst”, in: Horst Albert Glaser (ed.) *Deutsche Literatur. Eine Sozialgeschichte. Jahrhundertwende: Vom Naturalismus zum Expressionismus 1880-1918*. Volume 8. Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1982, p. 156.

especially from the 1890s onwards. The result has been a widespread, intractable and even inaccessible conceptual situation. Jürgen Koppensteiner, for instance, comments as late as 1981 in respect of the German curriculum in American institutions:

Sich mit Heimatliteratur, ganz gleich welcher Provenienz, zu befassen, ist wohl ein Unterfangen, das derzeit nicht auf allgemeine Zustimmung hoffen darf, ja das bestenfalls vielleicht belächelt wird. Haben wir es da, so mögen manche fragen, nicht mit einem Gegenstand aus der literarischen Rumpelkammer zu tun? [...] Dennoch ist es angebracht, dem lange verpönten und totgeschwiegenen Begriff 'Heimat' auch im Deutschunterricht hierzulande wieder etwas Aufmerksamkeit zu schenken.<sup>179</sup>

It is noteworthy how Koppensteiner implicitly observes the effect of a historical conundrum on the notion of literary aesthetics – on the one hand, “Heimat” is a term beset with negative connotations, on the other, writing concerned with it was consequentially relegated wholesale. Josephine Donovan observes in her comparative study on regional writing:

The American tradition has received serious and sustained scholarly attention, especially in recent years, but the European tradition has attracted relatively little; to my knowledge no comprehensive studies of the movement exist. In fact, the European tradition has yet to be clearly identified and analyzed as such. [...] In addition, in Germany the genre has been neglected by critics because of its unfair association with the Nazi *Heimat* literature.<sup>180</sup>

The reason for the deep suspicion of *Heimatliteratur* on the part of historians is here concisely articulated by Donovan, although the terminology involved needs to be differentiated further. Texts championed by the NSDAP will be referred to as *Blut und Boden* literature in this study, to acknowledge the demagoguery that was its impetus. It is necessary to disidentify this category from the heterogeneous phenomenon broadly known as Wilhelmine *Heimatliteratur*: the latter was subject to different, albeit fast changing and tempestuous socio-historic conditions and internationally shared epistemological preoccupations. To dub it simply a precursor to Nazi literature is inappropriate, since this view underestimates the NSDAP demagoguery machine.

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<sup>179</sup> Jürgen Koppensteiner. “Anti-Heimatliteratur: Ein Unterrichtsversuch mit Franz Innerhofers Roman *Schöne Tage*”, in: *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*. Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring 1981), p. 9.

<sup>180</sup> Josephine Donovan. *European Local-Color Literature. National Tales, Dorfgeschichten, Romans Champêtres*. New York: Continuum, 2010, p. ix.



Two examples will serve to highlight problems involved in such an interpretation. Alan Bance dismisses *Heimatliteratur* as a homogeneous, ideologically derived genre:

The right-wing version of regeneration, resulting from the radicalising of conservatism after 1890, gave rise to some of the most popular literature of the Wilhelmine period, known as *Heimatkunst* or 'home-town literature', and related to the village-tale genre of the mid nineteenth century which had appealed so strongly to the German realists. The programme of the *Heimatkunst* movement stemmed from books like Julius Langbehn's *Rembrandt als Erzieher* (1890) [...] which enjoyed an enormous readership, and formed a part of the ideological baggage the Nazis were later to take up. It is only a short step from the racism and crude Social Darwinism of *Heimatkunst* to the 'blood and soil' literature of the Third Reich, and in general the movement precisely prefigures the Nazi combination of pseudo-science and vulgar romanticism. Social Darwinism was all-pervasive in late nineteenth-century Germany. The conviction that the weakest must go to the wall is expressed time and again in literature [...].<sup>181</sup>

Although Bance correctly identifies that *Heimatkunst* was connected with a longer history of regional writing, the *Dorfgeschichte*, this genre is here dismissed in an obfuscating allusion to the partiality of German realists of the mid nineteenth century. Likewise, the linguistic distinction between *Heimatkunst* and blood and soil literature does not serve the purposes of differentiation, since they are introduced as conceptually all but identical. A peremptory judgement of an entire literary genre is suspect: a literary movement is as unlikely to have a single conceptual point of departure as it is subsequently to inspire a homogeneous group of authors. Bance's implied conclusion, that "racism and crude Social Darwinism" are both inseparable from this genre and specific to Wilhelmine society, where it was "all-pervasive", potentially supports negative and obsolete stereotypes about Germany, again rather than serving the purposes of differentiation.

That the idea of *Heimatkunst* as a distinct and dislocated genre, arising after the publication of Nietzsche protégé Julius Langbehn's *Rembrandt als Erzieher*,<sup>182</sup> has

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<sup>181</sup> Alan Bance, "The novel in Wilhelmine Germany: from realism to satire", in: Graham Bartram (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Modern German Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 37.

<sup>182</sup> Cf. Julius Langbehn. *Rembrandt als Erzieher. Von einem Deutschen*. Leipzig: Hirschfeld, 1890. – Critical opinions about the actual connection between Langbehn's and Nietzsche's writings seem often to diverge in terms of emphasis and bias. By way of an example, Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman note that Langbehn's text *Rembrandt als Erzieher* "apes Nietzsche's aphoristic manner and loose association of topics, but where Nietzsche at his best writes with brilliantly allusive concision, Langbehn's style echoes his name in its long-windedness" in a gesture that appears to wish to minimise the connection between

generally been accepted by posterity is probably attributable to Adolf Bartels's tracts, which evince a strongly hegemonistic gist. In his article "Heimatkunst" in 1900, Bartels, a high-profile literary historian of the time and one of only few theoreticians of the genre, distinguishes *Heimatkunst* from prior regionally-specific writing by contriving a fusion between national sentiment and aesthetic parameters for the former, in order to achieve the diminution of the latter:

Örtliche Kunst ist noch lange keine Heimatkunst, ist in der Regel nicht einmal Kunst, geht bescheiden neben der großen Kunst, der allgemeinen Litteraturentwicklung her und bezweckt im Grunde nichts weiter als darzuthun, daß auch 'abseits' poetisches Leben und poetisches Interesse vorhanden ist. Sie hat kulturhistorische Bedeutung, kaum ästhetisch-litterarische, höchstens gewinnt sie als Stofffinderin und Bewahrerin für die eigentliche Kunst, die Gesamtkunst eines Volkes Wert."<sup>183</sup>

This commentary may be compared with the same writer's earlier standpoint on 'high' and 'low' literature in an article entitled "Nationale Dichtung", which appeared in 1894.

A schizoid style of theorising here becomes clear as a basic attitude:

Es ist eine, wenn auch verzeihliche Täuschung, anzunehmen, daß wir zwei Litteraturen hätten, eine für die Kenner und eine für die Massen; noch immer wirken Goethe, Schiller, und, außer den mit ihnen genannten, noch manche andre Dichter mehr oder minder auf die Massen ein, und ich hege die feste Überzeugung, daß auch in Zukunft Dichter hervortreten werden, die man ihnen wird anreihen dürfen,

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them, as well as to ridicule Langbehn. (Elizabeth Boa/Rachel Palfreyman. *Heimat. A German Dream. Regional Loyalties and National Identity in German Culture 1890-1990*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 38.) According to Ruprecht/Bänsch, Langbehn's tract, which "kopiert [...] den Nietzsche der 'Unzeitgemäßen Betrachtungen'", portrays a world-view which disowns "Naturwissenschaft, Demokratismus und Sozialismus", while supporting Germany's Imperial claims "im politischen Weltkonzert der Völker". Rupert and Bänsch deem the tract to construct an ideology which acted as precursor to *Heimatliteratur* while being itself regionally biased against the German South. They also note its opposition to the "wurzellose Leben in der Großstadt Berlin." (Erich Ruprecht/Dieter Bänsch (eds.) *Manifeste und Dokumente zur deutschen Literatur 1890-1910*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1981, pp. 322.) – Langbehn's text constructs an image of Germany and Germans which is at once idealised and tribal: "Rembrandt ist der Prototyp des deutschen Künstlers; er und nur er entspricht deshalb vollkommen, als Vorbild, den Wünschen und Bedürfnissen, welche dem deutschen Volke von heute auf geistigem Gebiet vorschweben – sei es auch theilweise unbewußt. [...] Rembrandt war von Geburt ein Holländer. Es ist bezeichnend und eine äußere Bestätigung für den exzentrischen Charakter der Deutschen daß ihr nationalster Künstler ihnen nur innerlich, nicht politisch angehört [...]" (Langbehn, *Rembrandt als Erzieher*, p. 8.) In terms of his style, it is worth noting how Langbehn constructs a psychologically manipulative gesture by extending his judgement – or authority – to stipulate the existence of unconscious desires. However, it is also worth reading the import of his message in a differentiated way: idealisation and tribalisation in themselves, while psychologically immature, are actually in themselves ideologically insipid. Fears of the consequences of rootless urban living, in turn, were well-founded and would have contributed to his appeal. What *actually* constellates the pathology of Langbehn's discourse is the basic interpretation of life in terms of power, which he takes from Nietzsche's teachings. The assumption of power, as a *a priori* ontological concept, is added to neo-romantic images of art and nature, combined with an idealised presentation of the phenomena "Volk" and "Individualismus", as though they were psychologically compatible concepts. (Cf. for instance, Langbehn, *Rembrandt als Erzieher*, pp. 3-4.) Power, as ontological value, effortlessly equates to the notion of right in such a perceptual synthesis, and is supportive of Imperial and colonial aspirations, as highlighted by Ruprecht and Bänsch.

<sup>183</sup> Adolf Bartels, "Heimatkunst", quoted in: Erich Ruprecht/Dieter Bänsch. *Manifeste und Dokumente zur deutschen Literatur 1890-1910*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1981, p. 333.

mögen sie sich nun Realisten, Naturalisten oder sonstwie nennen. Die aber, die für den 'Markt des Vulgarismus' arbeiten, gehören nicht zur Litteratur.<sup>184</sup>

Bartels's bid to overcome the traditionally perceived schism between high and low – here coined as vulgar – literature, in order to achieve a repostulation of literature as one uncontested whole instead completes the perceptual split: *Trivialliteratur* is simply dislocated by denying it the status of literature. Such a style of theorising is of course neither adequate for the determination of literary quality, nor for the historical or genealogical determination of a literary genre.<sup>185</sup> Of the “kleinen Kreis von Aktivisten” who acted as “theoretisch fundierende[] Gruppe” for the “Heimatkunstbewegung”,<sup>186</sup> the third generally acknowledged main representative was Friedrich Lienhard. He was more moderate than either Langbehn or Bartels. Significantly, he saw *Heimatkunst* as directly related to the *Dorfgeschichte*, which latter should act as inspiration for a new phase of regionally-specific writing.<sup>187</sup> That Langbehn's and Bartels's voices have been acknowledged as the more vocal ones, therefore, does not mean that they need also to be taken as the conceptually more significant.

A second, subtly different problem emerges when *Heimatkunst* is retrospectively evaluated in accordance with left-political theoretical standpoints.<sup>188</sup> Questions

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<sup>184</sup> Adolf Bartels. “Nationale Dichtung”, in: *Die Grenzboten. Zeitschrift für Politik, Literatur und Kunst*. Vol. 53. (1894), pp. 18-27, 70-82, 164-72. Online version: <http://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/grenzboten/search/quick?query=%22Nationale+Dichtung%22>. Accessed 12 Dec. 2013.

<sup>185</sup> It should be added by way of rectification that the claim that “in dem Aufsatz ‘Nationale Dichtung’ (1894) ersetzte [Bartels] die ästhetisch-literarischen Wertkategorien durch ein an nationalen Werten ausgerichtetes Beurteilungssystem literarischer Werke” (Kay Dohnke/Dietrich Stein (eds.) *Gustav Frenssen in seiner Zeit*. Holstein: Boyens, 1997, p. 355), is not justifiable from the context of the arguments constructed in this text – rather, Bartels's attitude appears to have become progressively more extreme after the turn of century. “Nationale Dichtung”, while maintaining opaque and rigid aesthetic standpoints, actually forwards its author's categorical view that “ich halte es für zwecklos, eine nationale Kunst zu wollen, und behaupte, daß noch nie wahrhafte Kunst eine direkt nationale Tendenz gehabt hat, sondern, wo es der Ideale bedurfte, überall rein künstlerischen gefolgt ist.” Further, Bartels at this point maintains that “das bewußte Streben nach ‘deutscher’ Poesie ist auch überflüssig, ja im Hinblick auf eine bestimmte vaterländische Dichtung unsrer Tage sei es gesagt, sogar schädlich”. (Bartels, “Nationale Dichtung”, <http://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/grenzboten/periodical/pageview/217705?query=Nationale%20Dichtung>.)

<sup>186</sup> Kay Dohnke. “Heimatliteratur”, in: Diethart Kerbs/Jürgen Reulecke (eds.) *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen 1880-1933*. Wuppertal: Peter Hammer, 1998, p. 483.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. for instance, Friedrich Lienhard. “Vom Reichtum deutscher Landschaft”, in: *Flugschriften der Heimat*. Vol. 4. Leipzig/Berlin: Georg Heinrich Meyer, 1900, p. 16. – Lienhard further posits *Heimatliteratur* as an antidote to modernistic “Decadence” and the “Psychologie der Großstädter”, which he sees as “kümmerlich und einseitig”. (Lienhard, “Vom Reichtum deutscher Landschaft”, p. 17.)

<sup>188</sup> Peter Zimmermann provides one such viewpoint, since he sees *Heimatkunst* as the result of ideological manipulations arising first from agrarian interests, and secondly from national politics. (Cf. Zimmermann, “Heimatkunst”, pp. 154-68.)

concerning the process of meaning-making itself here become marginalised. Psychological significance and epistemological assumptions and values – ironically, the process of ideologisation itself, are backgrounded or ignored in theoretical viewpoints that interpret the process of meaning-making as occurring in a one-sided manner. Jennifer Jenkins observes:

*Heimat* is one of the German language's most complex, ambiguous, and opaque terms. While the idea of the homeland, or home place, has a universal emotional currency, the deep connections that *Heimat* has had to Germany's troubled national history have often given the word a powerfully negative resonance. The idea of *Heimat*, as articulated in the mid-nineteenth century writings of Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl, celebrated the pre-industrial rural culture of the *Volk* and its cultural and racial embeddedness in the natural landscape. Intellectual and cultural histories written since 1945 have explored the instrumentalization of this idea by political conservatives after 1890 and its use in anti-urban and anti-modern diatribes.<sup>189</sup>

Her comments form part of recently re-opened dialogues about both the term *Heimat* and the literary genre connected with it. Jenkins implicitly points to the fact that *Heimatkunst*<sup>190</sup> belongs to a longer genealogy of regional writing by referring to the early sociologist Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl's theories about concepts like "Volkssitten", "Volkspersönlichkeit" and "Nationalbewußtsein".<sup>191</sup> Her summary of his views, however, similarly to Bance's approach, is taken out of context. For instance, Riehl refers to "Nation" in an evolutionary sense, which is notable in view of his text's publication date of 1861, two years after the publication of Charles Darwin's treatise *On the Origin of Species*.<sup>192</sup> As well as incorporating perceptions that were then shared across Western Europe and America, such as the social-evolutionary idea of "jugendliche Culturstufen",<sup>193</sup> Riehl emphasises the connection between individual and collective identity:

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<sup>189</sup> Jennifer Jenkins. "Heimat Art, Modernism, Modernity", in: David Blackbourn/James Retallack (eds.) *Localism, Landscape, and the Ambiguities of Place. German-Speaking Central Europe, 1860-1930*. Toronto/London: University of Toronto Press, 2007, p. 60.

<sup>190</sup> *Heimatliteratur* and *Heimatkunst* are here used synonymously.

<sup>191</sup> Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl. *Die deutsche Arbeit*. Stuttgart: Cotta, 1861, pp. 10, 56, 57.

<sup>192</sup> Cf. Charles Darwin. *On the Origin of Species*. London: John Murray, 1959. – Translations of this treatise began to appear in Germany from 1860. (Cf. for instance Thomas Glick. *The Comparative Reception of Darwinism*. London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988, p. 82.)

<sup>193</sup> Riehl, *Die deutsche Arbeit*, p. 20. – According to Chandak Sengoopta, nineteenth-century debates about race were conducted internationally and proceeded variously along "monogenist" and "polygenist" lines. The latter has acquired notoriety because it inclined towards hard-line racial views. According to these, the extermination of indigenous peoples, such as Native Americans and Australians, was considered to be a real and consequential option in view of the idea of genetic inferiority that was projected

Wir sind in Gruppe und Gattung doch wieder eine moralische Person, denn unsere freie That webt mit an der Entwicklung unseres Gemeinlebens. Darum darf man von einer Volkspersönlichkeit reden, indem man sich das ganze Volk als Einen Charakter denkt. Je mehr sich ein Volk selbstbestimmend entwickelt, um so größeres Recht gewinnt es auf den Ehrentitel der Volkspersönlichkeit. Aber auch im rohesten Urvolke schlummert der Keim derselben. Die Volkspersönlichkeiten im weitesten, aber auch zugleich tiefsten und naturnothwendigsten Sinne sind die Nationen – die Stamm- und Naturvölker.<sup>194</sup>

It is, further, notable that Riehl's acceptance of human-societal evolution and biological kinship here proceeds in terms of the moral responsibility of the individual to the whole, while primitive is equated with original, in turn positively connoted in the term "Urvolk". Riehl also distances his biologically-defined nationhood from politics by acknowledging the potential of misappropriation and demagoguery: "Nationalität ist der Gegenwart ein heiliges Wort, und gerade weil es uns so heilig ist, treibt andererseits jetzt auch der Teufel so bequem sein Spiel damit."<sup>195</sup> A further insight into how conceptual contexts were shared at that time can be gleaned from Riehl's reception. Wolf Lepenies refers to him as an "artisan and poet" who "made folklore into a German science", and who was lauded "in the Westminster Review" by the English novelist George Eliot for his books "*Die bürgerliche Gesellschaft* (1851) and *Land und Leute* (1853)". Eliot deemed these texts to be a potential "model [for] England", and "of significance first and foremost on account of their factual content and the philosophy of life that might be derived from it."<sup>196</sup> Remarkably, although Lepenies can be described as another interpreter of nineteenth-century German thought predominantly in terms of its precursorship to fascism, he, unlike Jenkins, makes an exception of Riehl: "it is certainly correct to say that there is no direct path leading from Riehl to the German sociology [of] the end of the nineteenth and during the first third of the twentieth centuries."<sup>197</sup> Riehl's thinking may be termed an admixture in keeping with that time – like other thinkers in Europe

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on to them in accordance with polygenist assumptions. Monogenist thinking also held Western European nations to be superior, but on account of having reached more advanced cultural stages, rather than on the basis of genetic superiority. Indigenous peoples, according to this belief, were destined themselves to advance toward advanced cultural stages. This type of thinking did not forward the possibility of genocide, but did justify colonialism. (Cf. Chandak Sengoopta, "Race, Gender and Evolution", in: *Darwin, Darwinism and the Modern World*. Recorded Books, LLC, 2004 Lecture 9.)

<sup>194</sup> Riehl, *Die deutsche Arbeit*, p. 56.

<sup>195</sup> Riehl, *Die deutsche Arbeit*, p. 56.

<sup>196</sup> Wolf Lepenies. (R.J. Hollingdale (transl.) *Between Literature and Science: The Rise of Sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. 200, 199.

<sup>197</sup> Lepenies, *Between Literature and Science*, p. 202.

and America, he speculated on what Darwin's evolutionary hypotheses meant for human society. At the same time, he makes an appeal for the concepts of personality and intuition that amounts to a defence against modernity, the significance of which has, largely, been interpreted negatively in the German context. Again, however, it is necessary to re-evaluate whether it is the attempt at defence *per se*, or ideologically-charged appropriations of such a defence which deserves censure.

In Jenkin's study, *Heimat* is acknowledged to have universal emotional currency, but at the same time, she sees its meaning to have developed on a legacy of racially-biased theorising, which was ripe for instrumentalization. The implication is the *activation* of pre-existent ideas for political purposes, rather than insidious as well as overt processes of appropriation, by which existing meanings, which are valuable in themselves, come to be removed, and extraneous meanings added, specifically for the purpose of wielding power. In this respect, Andreas Schuhmann usefully refers to a series of "situationsgebundene Neu- und Uminterpretationen",<sup>198</sup> which took place over time in respect of understandings of *Heimat*. Josephine Donovan identifies regionally-focused literature, which arose "in the early 1800s in Europe", by its "realistic focus upon a particular geographical locale, its native customs, its physical and cultural environment, and its regional dialect" – components that are still recognisable in *Heimatliteratur*. She highlights the essentially colonial nature of this literature:

Most of the native cultures seized and colonized by the imperial Western powers were premodern oral cultures deemed by the colonizers as inferior to Western modes of modernity. Similarly, in the construction of modern nation-states, regions within states were culturally colonized; that is, held up as inferior to externally imposed cultural standards of modernity, to which regional natives were urged instead to conform.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Andreas Schuhmann. *Heimat denken. Regionales Bewußtsein in der deutschsprachigen Literatur zwischen 1815 und 1914*. Cologne/Weimar/Vienna: Böhlau, 2002, p. 1.

<sup>199</sup> Donovan, *European Local-Color Literature*, p. 1. – It will be readily apparent that the previously highlighted approach of Adolf Bartels to pose regional writing as national writing was itself a conceptually dominating move, akin to Donovan's observations.

In contrast to Jenkins, Donovan's comparative study of nineteenth-century movements of regional writing, which are shown to have occurred across Europe and in America, identifies the essential motivation as being

a reaction against the impositions of modernity upon the regions by the dominant metropolitan centers in the respective jurisdictions [...]. This cultural colonization was resisted so as to preserve locally eccentric traditions and dialects in the face of metropolitan pressure to conform to imposed standards.<sup>200</sup>

By adopting this perspective also to Wilhelmine *Heimatliteratur*, two related enquiries emerge. Both provide an opportunity to interrogate the functionality of discourse: firstly, the extent to which *Heimatkunst* was still capable of evincing narratives which incorporate resistant practice, in accordance with the genre's literary legacy, can show what kinds of conceptual alternatives were being realised in narrative form at that time. Secondly, to look for instances where the dominant discourse subsumes conceptual resistance is the negative counterpart of this enquiry. The historical and literary interest of my investigation, therefore, is attended by a psychological one, which is also relevant to contemporary concerns. The first of the two types of enquiries will be foregrounded – the question, using Charlotte Niese as example, is primarily, though not exclusively, about the actual resilience of *Heimatkunst* narratives.

The reception of works by the case study authors also indicates where their narratives were subject to conceptual colonisation by discourse parameters that determined both “the limits of what could be said”,<sup>202</sup> and how that which was said was subsequently judged. The practice of critical prejudice against the work of women is honestly acknowledged by Friedrich Castelle in his introduction to Charlotte Niese's fiction. He emphasises her stature by admitting that “manche schriftstellernde Frau [...] bei der landläufigen Leichtfertigkeit des literarischen Urteils in ihrem innersten Wesen verkannt [wird].”<sup>203</sup> One example of such “Leichtfertigkeit” perhaps was Heinrich Spiero's view, who describes Niese as “bei sehr ungleichem Schaffen eine eigenartige, heimatliche

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<sup>200</sup> Donovan, *European Local-Color Literature*, p. x.

<sup>202</sup> David Jackson (ed.). *Taboos in German Literature*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996, p. 81.

<sup>203</sup> Friedrich Castelle. *Charlotte Niese. Eine literarische Studie*. Leipzig: Grunow, [1914], p. 4.

Begabung”.<sup>204</sup> It is perhaps to validate this opinion that he comments that *Licht und Schatten* is “zu blaß, [hat] nicht den rechten Ton für die große Stadt”, and instead approves of her “Jugenderlebnisse von der Insel Fehmarn”, as also of her later historical novels, such as *Vergangenheit*.<sup>205</sup>

Die verhältnismäßige Ruhe und Übersehbarkeit des Lebens am Ende des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts lag [ihr] besser als der Wirrwarr, den das zwanzigste an den gleichen Punkt der Niederelbe gesetzt hat.<sup>206</sup>

Spiero’s appraisal is noteworthy for providing another perspective about the motivation behind *Heimatliteratur* at the end of the nineteenth century – it continues to be aligned with a retrospective viewpoint that avoids – or resists – the “Diskursfülle”<sup>207</sup> of its time. Niese’s autobiography appears to confirm his impression:

Es ist eine Welle des Materialismus über unser armes Volk niedergegangen, die auch die geistigen Arbeiter, die Studenten, die unsere Hoffnung sind, zu ertränken droht. Wer alt ist, fleht darum, daß die Wasser sich wieder verlaufen mögen. Aber er wird es nicht mehr erleben. Da ist es denn eine Erholung, den Blick rückwärts zu wenden [...].<sup>208</sup>

It will become apparent, however, that Spiero’s appraisal is not an accurate reflection, either of her thematic preoccupations or, in the case of *Licht und Schatten*, of her stylistic achievements. In contrast to Spiero, Castelle compares Niese’s mature work to Wilhelm Raabe’s “beste Kulturromane”. He finds that she presents

vielverworrene Alltagsschicksale, und gerade diese Umgestaltung der Alltagsschicksale zu allgemein menschlichen Symbolen mit Hilfe eines gemütvollen Humors, ist ja eigentlich die höchste Aufgabe der Romankunst.<sup>209</sup>

With regard to *Licht und Schatten* specifically, he finds that she is a

Meisterin der Prosaunst [...] die nicht mit Äußerlichkeiten blenden will, sondern selbst und stets in den notwendigen Äußerlichkeiten das tiefste Wesen des Menschentums zu ergründen und darzustellen bestrebt ist.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Heinrich Spiero. *Geschichte der deutschen Frauendichtung seit 1800*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1913, p. 104.

<sup>205</sup> Cf. Charlotte Niese. *Vergangenheit. Eine Erzählung aus der Emigrantenzzeit*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1902. – *Vergangenheit* is set in Altona, around 1800.

<sup>206</sup> Spiero, *Geschichte der deutschen Frauendichtung*, p. 104.

<sup>207</sup> Moritz Baßler. “Figurationen der Entsagung”, in: Dirk Göttsche/Ulf-Michael Schneider (eds.) *Jahrbuch der Raabe-Gesellschaft* 2010. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2010, p. 69.

<sup>208</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Von Gestern und Vorgestern*. Leipzig: Grunow, [1924], pp. 13-4.

<sup>209</sup> Castelle, *Charlotte Niese*, p. 27.

<sup>210</sup> Castelle, *Charlotte Niese*, p. 22.



The general, handed-down impression of Niese as a minor and forgettable author, and Spiero's assessment of *Licht und Schatten* in particular, further, do not accord with an assessment by Reinhold Muschler, a critic who deemed *Licht und Schatten* to be "viel zu wenig geschätzt", a "fein gebauter Roman, der zu dem Gewaltigsten gehört, was an Thematik die neue Zeit dichterisch gegeben hat." In contradistinction to Spiero's view of this novel as "blaß" and lacking the right tone for the city, Muschler observes:

Wuchtiges bäumt sich auf, Ungeheuerlichkeiten tollten hoch, Entsetzliches wird miterlebt, aber nicht der Sensation halber, sondern nur als Fugenthema, das den melodischen Strom des Weltgeschehens nicht zerreißt, sondern ihn in seiner immerwährenden Harmonik doppelt begreifen läßt aus dieser kreischenden Dissonanz heraus.<sup>211</sup>

The comparison of the novel to a fugue more accurately describes how it functions in structural terms: the foregrounding of the Bardenfleth family is only relative, since subplots encompassing all sections of society impact on each other as mutual contingents. These contradictory critical appraisals make the pertinence of Castle's observation regarding male critical prejudice more apparent. It is probably contingent on this that in spite of complimentary critical appraisals such as those above, no detailed textual analyses of *Licht und Schatten* appeared alongside them – a purpose here is to provide such a reading, to examine both text and appraisal.

### Case Study 2: Luise Westkirch – Sozialromane and the "Umwertung der Werte"

The pertinence of Luise Westkirch as a counterpoint case study to Charlotte Niese can be elucidated by a closer examination of the *Sozialroman* against the *Heimatroman* in the context of the Wilhemine popular fiction market. On the one hand, the longing for "freundlichere Bilder", which according to Kammerhof appear in *Heimatliteratur* narratives as a reaction to naturalistic social novels, finds both contemporaneous and retrospective corroboration. For instance, Max Dauthendey recalls how, after

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<sup>211</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Von Gestern und Vorgestern*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1924, p. 10

publication of Emile Zola's *Germinal*,<sup>212</sup> the "Wohlbehagen des Bürgergeistes" was disturbed by the "neuen Armuts- und Arbeitergestalten, die, ungewaschen und ungekämmt, verhungert und ungehobelt, in Fabrikluft schwindsüchtig und elend geworden [...] das Erbarmen und die Bewunderung der Dichter gefunden hatten."<sup>213</sup> According to Henry Remak, however, a large-scale change in public reading preferences away from Naturalism did not take place until the first decade of the twentieth century. Consulting statistical sources, he observes that in Germany, Zola "suffers a serious loss in popularity, very marked from 1906 on, after having reached his peak in the 1890s."<sup>214</sup> While Zola was being abandoned, however, the popularity of the earlier, markedly socially critical French realists increased:

Stendhal, with only one German translation to his credit in the entire last quarter of the nineteenth century, can boast 30 volumes from 1900 to 1914, including a first-class critical edition of his collected works in ten volumes. In the same period, Balzac jumps to 76 volumes, as against 17 from 1880 to 1899, and Flaubert to 46, compared to 6 in the previous period."<sup>215</sup>

Kammerhof's conclusion that *Heimatliteratur* had superseded narratives with a deconstructive gist by 1910 is therefore not borne out. Far from threatening German literature with destruction, fundamental social critique continued to complement the less overtly confrontational, "freundlicheren Bilder" of *Heimatkunst* – in other words, the "Umwertung" of values continued to occur alongside the "Aufwertung" encapsulated in literary efforts to express the "deutsche Volksseele".<sup>216</sup>

The difference between Niese's and Westkirch's focuses becomes clear in a description of Westkirch's work by Manfred Brauneck:

Westkirch zeigt sich in ihren Werken als eine der wenigen Schriftstellerinnen ihrer Zeit, die sich mit sozialen Problemen auseinandersetzten. Sie schildert sowohl die Arbeiterverhältnisse als auch die Auffassung und das Verhalten der

<sup>212</sup> Cf. Emile Zola. *Germinal*. Paris: Charpentier, 1885.

<sup>213</sup> Max Dauthendey. *Gedankengut aus meinen Wanderjahren*. Munich: A. Langen, 1913, Vol. 1, p. 159-60.

<sup>214</sup> Henry H. Remak. "The German Reception of French Realism", in: PMLA, Vol. 69, No. 3 (June 1954), p. 426. – The lending library figures supplied by Martino confirm Remak's observation; the amalgamative list of "Erfolgsautoren in den Leihbibliotheken der Jahre 1889-1914" gives Zola as twenty-second out of the hundred most-read authors. (Cf. Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, pp. 410-12.)

<sup>215</sup> Remak. "The German Reception of French Realism", p. 426.

<sup>216</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", p. 7.

Kapitalistenkreise. Sie kritisiert die sich verschärfenden Klassengegensätze und setzt sich vor allem für die Menschenrechte der Arbeiter ein. Die Lösung des sozialen Problems sieht sie in gegenseitiger Nächstenliebe und einer gerechteren Beteiligung der Arbeiter am Ertrag ihrer Arbeit. Sie fordert langsame, zielbewußte Reformen unter Erhaltung der bestehenden wirtschaftlichen Ordnung und kapitalistischen Produktionsweise.<sup>217</sup>

While dealing with Niese's work presents challenge due to the *Heimat* context that was her preferred genre, this concern only applies marginally to Westkirch, who embraced a variety of genres and who composed regional narratives more peripherally. On the other hand, a consideration of her output of *Heimat*-narratives in the Third Reich, which would be of undeniable interest, is beyond the scope of this study. Approaching Westkirch's late nineteenth-century *Sozialromane*, rather, necessitates putting aside belittling judgements aimed to derogate this genre for entirely different reasons than those that apply to *Heimatliteratur*. According to Norbert Bachleitner's view, for instance, Brauneck's impression that Westkirch's literary activism was a rarity is mistaken – he summarises late nineteenth-century socially critical narratives as an opaque proliferation of “mehr oder weniger triviale Tendenzromane [which] diene[n] der Vermittlung verschiedenster Ideologien und sozialer ‘Rezepte’.”<sup>218</sup> This issue will be dealt with in the context of her narratives, where it can be examined in detail.

Luise Westkirch was born in Amsterdam, where her father was a merchant dealing in fabrics in either 1853 or 1858, according to different sources. She “ließ sich 1872 für die längste Zeit ihres Lebens in Hannover nieder, später in Klein-Süntel bei Hameln u. München”,<sup>219</sup> where she died in 1941. Biographical information about Westkirch is scarce. A rare memoir reveals something about her background and temperament after the family had moved to the “bayerische Pfalz”, where it occupied a large property set in its own park:

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<sup>217</sup> Manfred Brauneck (ed.) *Autoren Lexikon deutschsprachiger Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1988, p. 703.

<sup>218</sup> Norbert Bachleitner. *Der englische und französische Sozialroman des 19. Jahrhunderts und seine Rezeption in Deutschland*. Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodolpi, 1993, p. 504.

<sup>219</sup> Wilhelm Kosch. *Deutsches Literatur-Lexikon: biographisch-bibliographisches Handbuch*. Bern: Saur, [1996], p. 3419.

Ich hatte meine Eltern, die ich liebte, ältere Geschwister, die mich verzogen, ich hatte meine Freundinnen, meine Tiere, die Bäume des Parks, die verständliche Sprache zu mir redeten. [...] Ich war so glücklich in jenen Jahren wie nur ein Kind sein kann. Aber ich hatte noch nicht meinen achten Geburtstag gefeiert, da starb mein Vater. Meine Mutter zog mit mir nach Mainz, in die engen Gassen einer Festung. Das Paradies meiner Kindheit schloß sich hinter mir. [...] Märchen und Geschichten in unzählbaren Mengen habe ich mir zusammengedacht in Schulstunden, die mich langweilten, die Hände auf dem Tisch still und artig dasitzend, eine Musterschülerin, die Lob bekam für ihre Bravheit, während doch all meine Gedanken meilenweit fern schweiften.<sup>220</sup>

The gently self-ironising memoir overall testifies to a highly imaginative and individualistic, as well as astute disposition, which arguably made the composition of narratives a necessity, rather than a pastime for Westkirch. Like Niese, she became “Lehrerin” as a young adult. Her first narrative, *Ein Familienzwist*,<sup>221</sup> was published in 1885 and this was followed by a series of other socially critical novels, novellas and *Erzählungen*. She also contributed narratives to the *Gartenlaube*. Her output was prolific and continued until 1941. While socially critical themes still figured strongly during the Weimar Republic, she resorted to other types of narratives after 1933, in particular to “Kriminal- und Heimatromane sowie historisch-vaterländische Romane”,<sup>222</sup> which were read in the Third Reich. Three of her social novels were used as a basis for films during the Weimar Republic;<sup>223</sup> one narrative, which appeared in the late *Kaiserreich*, was adapted for the stage.<sup>224</sup>

Due to the complexity of Westkirch’s style, only two principal narratives will be analysed. The first, a socially critical narrative entitled “Gretchens Liebhaber”, is an

<sup>220</sup> Luise Westkirch. “Das Paradies meiner Kindheit”, in: *Als unsre großen Dichterinnen noch kleine Mädchen waren*. Online version: *Sophie. A Digital Library of Works by German-Speaking Women*. <http://sophie.byu.edu/?q=node/3745>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.

<sup>221</sup> Cf. Luise Westkirch. *Ein Familienzwist*. Freiburg: Kiepert & von Bolschwing 1885.

<sup>222</sup> <http://www.zvab.com/Westkirch-Luise/60403906/buch>. Accessed 27 Feb 2013.

<sup>223</sup> Westkirch’s filmography is enumerated as *Die Gesunkenen* (1926), *Aus den Tiefen der Großstadt* (1921), and *Der Staatsanwalt* (1920). (Cf. *IMDb*. <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1802918/>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.) *Die Gesunkenen*, also known as *The Sunken*, is based on the novella *Diebe*; *Aus den Tiefen der Großstadt* is based on Westkirch’s novel *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, which alludes to Nietzsche’s work of the same title; *Der Staatsanwalt* is based on the novel of the same title. (Cf. Luise Westkirch. *Der Staatsanwalt*. Stuttgart: Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1900; Luise Westkirch. *Diebe: Novelle*. Leipzig: Reclam, 1898; Luise Westkirch. *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*. [1902]. – Publication details of the first edition are unknown. Kosch records first publication as 1902. A fifth edition is known to have appeared in Leipzig: Reclam, 1924. (Cf. Kosch, *Deutsches Literatur-Lexikon*, p. 3419.)

<sup>224</sup> Cf. Siegfried Wunderlin, Luise Westkirch. *Die drei Gesichter der Welt: Volksstück in drei Aufzügen*. Rapperswil bei Aarau: Selbstverlag des Verfassers, [1913]. – The title plays on an earlier narrative by Westkirch, which has a strongly regional focus and accuses the rural community of hypocrisy and materialism. (Cf. Luise Westkirch. *Die zwei Gesichter der Welt*. Bern: Haller, 1894.)

example of her early work and appeared in *Die Gartenlaube* in 1892.<sup>225</sup> It provides an opportunity to examine in detail what could and could not be said in this publication context. Notably, the white-collar milieu is centralised in this story, with both male and female *Angestellte* at the centre of the plot. The second narrative presented for case study is a *Sozialroman* entitled *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, which first appeared in 1896, achieving further print runs until a fourth, revised edition was published under the title of *Schauspieler des Lebens* in 1914. This narrative is an excellent example of the intricacy of Westkirch's style, including the use of – gendered – subtexts through thematic compounding. It again features *Angestellte* as an integral social stratum and highlights its negative potential, notably by featuring a ruthless and power-hungry employee. It also deals with female independence more unequivocally than does Niese. The reception of this narrative, however, evidences what can happen when a narrative transgresses “the limits of what could be said at that time”<sup>226</sup> and will therefore be dealt with in the context of a close textual reading of *Ein moderner Märtyrer*.

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<sup>225</sup> Luise Westkirch. “Gretchens Liebhaber”, in: *Die Gartenlaube*. Nos. 43-48, 1892.

<sup>226</sup> Jackson, *Taboos in German Literature*, p. 81.

## Autobiography as *Heimatliteratur*

### Charlotte Niese's Literary Contexts: Regional Writing in Wilhelmine Society

I have previously introduced Charlotte Niese as *Heimatsdichterin*, while positing Wilhelmine *Heimatliteratur* as a heterogeneous genre with a new middle class readership. Additionally, it is a conceptual successor of the *Dorfgeschichte*, while *Dorfgeschichte* itself is a culturally specific variant of an internationally present movement of regional writing, a movement that has been highlighted by Josephine Donovan as a potential “reaction against the impositions of modernity upon the regions by the dominant metropolitan centers in the respective jurisdictions”.<sup>1</sup> To contextualise Niese's work more specifically, it is worth noting the simultaneous presence of all three strands of regional writing in the Wilhelmine popular fiction market. The top 100 “Erfolgsautoren in den Leihbibliotheken der Jahre 1889-1914”<sup>2</sup> are given in separate lists referring to libraries holding up to 4 999, up to 10 000 and over 10 000 volumes. All three include mid-nineteenth century exponents such as Peter Rosegger, Berthold Auerbach, Ernst Willkomm and Heinrich Zschokke alongside late nineteenth-century authors, such as Ludwig Ganghofer, Anton von Perfall and Arthur Achleitner. Furthermore, with few exceptions, the earlier writers outflank the later ones as the most enduringly successful authors of that time.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the reading public maintained

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<sup>1</sup> Donovan's study mainly focuses on “Maria Edgeworth (Irish); Sir Walter Scott (Scottish); Berthold Auerbach (German); Jeremias Gotthelf (Swiss); Alexandre Weill (Alsatian); Annette von Droste-Hülshoff (German); George Sand (French); and Sarah Orne Jewett (American).” She additionally discusses the regional writing of other countries, including Scandinavia, Spain, Italy, Russia and Latin America. (Josephine Donovan. *European Local-Color Literature: National Tales, Dorfgeschichten, Romans Champêtres*. New York: Continuum, 2010, pp. x, 169-70.)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Alberto Martino. *Die deutsche Leihbibliothek. Geschichte einer literarischen Institution (1756-1914)*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1990, pp. 410-16.

<sup>3</sup> The absence of the controversial and overtly right-wing *Heimatliteratur* author Gustav Frenssen in this context is conspicuous. He is listed as among the most-read authors for several years around the turn of century in annual surveys of up to 150 lending libraries published by the Berlin periodical *Das literarische Echo*. (Cf. Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, pp. 472, 483, 495, 509, 524.) Martino notes that “die Umfrage begann im Jahre 1900. Neun Jahre später wurde der Versuch, der schon 1907 unterbrochen worden war, endgültig eingestellt.” (Cf. Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, pp. 452.) In the survey of 1908-1909, Frenssen also no

an international taste in respect of regional writing – Sir Walter Scott, for instance, figures consistently, as well as prominently in these rankings.<sup>4</sup> Charlotte Niese does not appear among the top one-hundred authors; Kammerhof notes that “der Verbreitung ihrer Bücher hat deren Preis nicht unwesentlich im Wege gestanden.”<sup>5</sup> Her popularity – as also that of Luise Westkirch – can, however, be gleaned from their mention in a “Liste beliebter Verfasser zur Erleichterung der Bücher-Auswahl” in a Hannover Leihbibliothek in 1899.<sup>6</sup>

To complete a consideration of Niese’s work in the context of Wilhelmine popular fiction, some brief observations about a contemporaneous literary-aesthetic perspective are pertinent. Kammerhof observes:

Die echten Künstler sind allerdings immer Heimatkünstler gewesen, und so darf man getrost behaupten, daß die Heimatkunst so alt ist wie die Kunst überhaupt; aber so ausgesprochen wie heute ist das noch nie der Fall gewesen. Dabei muß man es in Kauf nehmen, wenn diese Kunst Blüten und Früchte zeitigt, die abseits der Heerstraße gewachsen sind, die geradezu einer Mode huldigen, wenn z.B. die Heide auf einmal entdeckt wird und Heideromane sonder Zahl vor unseren erstaunten Augen auftauchen. Das trifft natürlich nicht die Dichter, die uns vollwertige Werke beschert haben [...] aber wenn wir dann “Heideschulmeister Uwe Karsten” von Felicitas Rose betrachten oder andere, so kann man nicht gut mit seiner Verwunderung zurückhalten, vornehmlich darüber, daß solche Werke überhaupt gelesen werden.<sup>7</sup>

The genre’s function is here viewed psychologically – Kammerhof sees it as facilitating authentic expression, since first-hand experience, along with deeply felt affect, forms the basis of authorial inspiration. Aside from the merit of this assertion for an aesthetic standpoint, which will be left open, the attitude expressed does resonate with the historical fact of Germany’s long regional, rather than national character: locale-specific

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longer appears. His absence in findings relating to the wider time-span would suggest that his novels were a more ephemeral literary phenomenon than has often been assumed by retrospective critics of Wilhelmine *Heimatliteratur*.

<sup>4</sup> Out of the hundred most-read authors, Scott overall came twentieth in the smaller libraries, sixtieth in medium-sized institutions and fifty-first in large libraries. (Cf. Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, pp. 411, 412, 414, 415.) – It should be added that the already mentioned survey conducted by *Das litterarische Echo* notes a trend away from international literature in respect of the *top seven* most-demanded authors from 1903. (Cf. Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 496.)

<sup>5</sup> Erich Kammerhof. “Charlotte Niese”, in: Hermann Graef (ed.). *Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte*. (Vol. 67, Rudolf Eichler (ed.)) Leipzig: Verlag für Literatur, Kunst und Musik, 1910, p. 14.

<sup>6</sup> Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, pp. 448-9. – Both are, ambivalently enough, categorised under “Damenlektüre”. Whether associations implicitly attendant on this term at that time, such as ‘light-weight’, ‘romantically unrealistic’, ‘conceptually unchallenging’, ‘domestic’ or ‘refined’ remains to be seen.

<sup>7</sup> Kammerhof, “Charlotte Niese”, p. 8.

narrative expression is in principle uniquely suited to a country with a long regional heredity. Ideological appropriation begins where 'regional' comes to be taken as 'mouthpiece of, or subject to, national', as has previously been highlighted in Adolf Bartels's views, rather than in portrayals of distinct socio-cultural contexts. What is striking about Kammerhof's observations, further, is his differentiated acknowledgement of qualitative variations within the genre. This acknowledgement is not affected by amalgamated socio-political and literary-aesthetic concerns, which tend to condition retrospective critics who have consequently constructed a subject that is "verpönt" and "totgeschwiegen".<sup>8</sup> Kammerhof instead perceives *Heimatliteratur* as essentially a manifestation of "Schöne Literatur", which, however, inevitably spawns inferior imitations by virtue of its very stature. In accordance with this view, he regards Niese as one of the high-quality exponents, among other Schleswig-Holstein leading lights such as "Detlev von Liliencron, Timm Kröger, Johannes Dose, Adolf Bartels, Hinrich Fehrs [...] Helene Voigt-Diederichs."<sup>9</sup> The inclusion of Bartels in this highly diverse list of course appears as suspect. But Kammerhof, despite being unequivocally enthusiastic about *Heimatliteratur* and himself nationalistically inclined, subsequently distances himself from Bartels, as also from the retrospectively discredited author Gustav Frenssen. He praises the former solely for his biographical work on Jeremias Gotthelf and his coining of the term "Heimatkunst" in that context,<sup>10</sup> while deeming the

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<sup>8</sup> Jürgen Koppensteiner. "Anti-Heimatliteratur: Ein Unterrichtsversuch mit Franz Innerhofers Roman *Schöne Tage*", in: *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*. Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring 1981), p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Despite the rigid distinction which Bartels again applies between "örtliche Kunst" and "Heimatkunst" in this biographical treatise, Gotthelf is posited as "vorbildlich" for *Heimatliteratur* because he depicted his "schweizerische Heimat [...] mit wahrer Naturgewalt" and "kannte die großen Zeitbewegungen und ihren Einfluß auf seine dörflische Welt sehr deutlich, und so geriet seine Darstellung niemals eng, ward typisch, ward bis zu einem gewissen Grade große Kunst." (Adolf Bartels, "Heimatkunst", quoted in: Erich Ruprecht/Dieter Bänisch. *Manifeste und Dokumente zur deutschen Literatur 1890-1910*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1981, pp. 333-4.) The pathological import of Bartels' treatise on Gotthelf is more difficult to detect, and may therefore have been missed by Kammerhof: the tribute to the Swiss Gotthelf proceeds in hyperbolic terms immediately after a dismissal of the other – German and Jewish – high-profile author of *Dorfgeschichten* August Auerbach. The latter is dubbed a perpetual outsider, the accusation levelled against Auerbach being "daß er Konflikte in das Dorfleben von außen hineintrage, daß er das Seelenleben der Dorfmenschen dialektisch durchbeize und mit gemachter Leidenschaft überhitze". Bartels here constructs the idea of a constitutional outsider without access to the indigenous "Seelenleben" (Bartels, "Heimatkunst", p. 334). His emphatic praise of Gotthelf therefore, rather than being conceived judiciously, appears in this context as a means of constructing a psychologically segregational self (or kin) against other discourse.



latter to misrepresent *Heimatliteratur*.<sup>11</sup> In view of these by no means straightforward literary and ideological contexts, the way in which Charlotte Niese's work functions, how on the one hand it contributes to a longing for authenticity and positive values, and on the other is vulnerable to conceptual colonisation, will therefore form an initial focus.

### Autobiographical Vignettes: Aus dänischer Zeit<sup>12</sup>

The popularity of *Aus dänischer Zeit* can be gleaned from Kammerhof, who observes that Niese had "durch dies Buch ihren Namen als Schriftstellerin begründet",<sup>13</sup> as well as from the fact that while they were being published initially as two volumes between 1892 and 1894, one of the component narratives appeared in *Die Gartenlaube*,<sup>14</sup> which had a mass readership, as already discussed. Since the subject here at hand is autobiographical writings, the purpose previously set needs to be specified a little further. Niese's "Bilder und Skizzen" are composed of discreet components that can be termed narrative vignettes; there is no systematic, chronological presentation. This style of memoir suggests an intuitive authorial attitude to an ontological issue explicated by early and mid-nineteenth century writers. In a commentary on Carl Gustav Jung's autobiography, Marie Louise von Franz points out that

many people have criticised the Jungian approach for not presenting psychic material systematically. But these critics forget that the material itself is a living experience charged with emotion, by nature irrational and ever-changing, which does not lend itself to systematisation except in the most superficial fashion [...] when [...] attempting to describe a single psychic event, we can do no more than present an honest picture of it from as many angles as possible.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Comparing Frenssen unfavourably with authors he deems to be the leading lights of the genre, he asserts: "Dagegen sagt es nichts, wenn Gustav Frenssen sie [*Heimatliteratur*] auf abschüssige Bahnen zu leiten sucht, und ihr mit 'Hilligenlei' und 'Klaus Hinrich Baas' einen schlechten Dienst erwiesen hat." (Kammerhof, *Charlotte Niese*, p. 9.)

<sup>12</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Aus dänischer Zeit. Bilder und Skizzen*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1903.

<sup>13</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Charlotte Niese. "Geburtstag", in: *Die Gartenlaube*. Nos. 51-52, 1893.

<sup>15</sup> Marie Louise von Franz. "The Process of Individuation", in: Carl Gustav Jung (ed.) *Man and His Symbols*. London: Picador, 1978, p. 167.

In respect of telling his own life, Jung asserts that judgement cannot feasibly attend the project:

Ich kann jedoch nur unmittelbare Feststellungen machen, nur 'Geschichten erzählen'. Ob sie wahr sind, ist kein Problem. Die Frage ist nur, ist es mein Märchen, meine Wahrheit? [...] Man ist ein psychischer Ablauf, den man nicht beherrscht, oder doch nur zum Teil. Infolgedessen hat man kein abgeschlossenes Urteil über sich oder über sein Leben. Sonst wüßte man alles darüber, aber das bildet man sich höchstens ein. [...] Darum hat die Geschichte keinen Anfang, und das Ziel ist nur ungefähr anzugeben.<sup>16</sup>

The interest of such an authorial stance, necessarily, is an inward one, as consciously realised by Jung, for whom "neben den inneren Ereignissen [...] die anderen Ereignisse, Reisen, Menschen und Umgebung [verblassen]" and who finds "daß wenn es auf die Verwicklungen des Lebens keine Antwort und keine Lösung von Innen her gibt, sie letzten Endes wenig besagen. Die äußeren Umstände können die inneren nicht ersetzen."<sup>17</sup> Similarly, for the English critic Virginia Woolf, the idea of moments of being are exceptional experiences that jolt the psyche and imprint themselves on the memory more than ordinary occurrences. They may have no external source, as in one of her earliest childhood experiences, when looking at a flower, she describes being suddenly aware of its wholeness, as well as its connectedness to a deeper life,<sup>18</sup> or they may consist of an extraordinary or traumatic event. In either case, they appear as

a blow from an enemy hidden behind the cotton wool of daily life; it is or will become a revelation of some order; it is a token of some real thing behind appearances; and I make it real by putting it into words. It is only by putting it into words that I make it whole; this wholeness means that it has lost its power to hurt me; it gives me, perhaps because by doing so I take away the pain, a great delight to put the severed parts together.<sup>19</sup>

Woolf's idea of writing as *discovery* rather than as *summary* resonates strongly with Jung's notion of the construction of a personally authentic myth; life events, as separate contents, are rearranged and synthesised to achieve such a construction. Discovering 'what belongs to what' is another way of describing the process of individuation, intuited in the revelation of some order, also articulated by Woolf as

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<sup>16</sup> Carl Gustav Jung. *Erinnerungen, Träume, Gedanken von C.G. Jung*. Solothurn/Düsseldorf: Walter, 1995, pp. 10-11.

<sup>17</sup> Jung, *Erinnerungen*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Virginia Woolf. *Moments of Being*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984, p. 80.

<sup>19</sup> Woolf, *Moments of Being*, p. 81.

a constant idea of mine; that behind the cotton wool is hidden a pattern; that we – I mean all human beings – are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of the work of art. *Hamlet* or a Beethoven quartet is the truth about this vast mass that we call the world.<sup>20</sup>

Perception is here presented as a consciousness-process that is non-utilitarian; the world exists for its own sake, and truth is accessible partially, relationally and indirectly – notably also, non-verbally. The overcoming of events that are potentially overwhelming to the psyche through writing are an integral aspect of the mythological construction – an aspect that will be seen as particularly pertinent to some of Niese's recollections. Her "Bilder und Skizzen" can potentially be taken either as novelties, with some limited socio-historical value but without much further import, or can be termed psychic vignettes – as the kind of consciousness that emerges, as well as the kind of unconscious assumptions and limitations that potentially reconstellate themselves. The reading here presented will be motivated by the viewpoints outlined above: it will be interested primarily in how Niese processes the events she relates, and secondarily in the events themselves.

#### "Allerhand Politisches": The Ambivalent Narrator

The setting of Niese's childhood memoirs is the island of Fehmarn, which belongs to terrain contested between nineteenth-century Denmark and Prussia. "Allerhand Politisches"<sup>21</sup> illustrates how national sentiment becomes clearly defined and even fervent in a contested borderland. Its subject is the Prussian conquest of Schleswig in 1864; the period before and up to this event make up the narrative time. The first-person perspective generally, and often seamlessly oscillates between the remembered child's view and its affect on the one hand, and retrospective interpretations that contextualise or attempt to explain the memories on the other.

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<sup>20</sup> Woolf, *Moments of Being*, p. 81.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Niese, "Allerhand Politisches", in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, pp. 219-236. (Henceforth: AP.)

Arguably, the narrative is at its strongest when these contextualisations focus on the psychological reality of the situations it depicts. Such as occurs, for instance, when the scene is set with the Danish monarch, “König Frederik”,<sup>22</sup> whose difficult relationship with the conservative Holstein “Ritterschaft” and “höheren Beamten” (AP, p. 219) stems from their hostility towards his wife: the “Gräfin Danner” had been a commoner prior to their marriage. Niese maintains a judicious distance in this respect:

Ob der Haß gerechtfertigt war, den die Schleswig-Holsteiner auf die Gemahlin des Königs geworfen hatten, ist schwer zu sagen. Sie war eine ungebildete, aber kluge Frau, die ihren Gemahl besser zu behandeln wußte, als ihre zwei Vorgängerinnen aus fürstlichem Blute. (AP, pp. 220-21)<sup>23</sup>

The liberal narratorial stance, implicit in the critical stance towards the aristocracy, is first underlined by the dry remark that “das Leben manches Beamten würde sich ganz anders gestaltet haben, wenn er seinen trotzigsten Stolz beiseite gesetzt und seine Frau zur Gräfin Danner gebracht hätte” (AP, p. 220). Beyond the observation that conservatism rested on a psychologically rigid bearing with self-defeating effects, however, the scope of critique is further expanded:

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<sup>22</sup> Niese here refers to the King of Denmark, Frederick VII, the last absolute monarch who ruled from 1848-1863.

<sup>23</sup> Niese’s judgement that the Countess Danner was uneducated but clever is debatable. The countess is said initially to have been educated to become a governess and is known to have studied at the ballet school of the opera in Copenhagen. Prejudice against the morganatic marriage, which was strong across Denmark as well as Holstein, is likely to have been intensified by the fact that she had been the *illegitimate* child of Juliane Rasmussen and the merchant Gotthilf Köppen, that she had worked as a ballet dancer, and that prior to her marriage to Frederick VII, she had had a child with Johan Berling, who also helped her to set up in business on her own. Poul Ulrich Jensen notes that her extensive correspondence does not bear witness to political scheming, but rather, to increasingly desperate attempts to keep the king fairly functional, since he was prone to excesses – Niese’s awareness that she knew how to handle the king is therefore an astute one. The two previous two marriages of the king had ended in divorce. (Cf. Poul Ulrich Jensen. “A Portrait of the Countess Danner”, in: <<http://www.historie-online.dk/nyt/bogfeature/grevinden.htm>>. Accessed 31 July 2013.) – Detailed information on Countess Danner’s early life proved difficult to access. The website which provided the details given above has been withdrawn since I accessed it. However, it appears that her background was common knowledge in the nineteenth century – Theodor Fontane’s novel *Unwiederbringlich*, for instance, makes extensive reference to the Countess, a fact that has recently been mentioned in a dissertation which provides a reading of this novel. Juljana Jacobsen notes that “Danner’s real name before she becomes a countess and wife to the king is Christine Louise Rasmussen, her first name coinciding precisely with the main female protagonist in the novel, Christine Holk” and that Countess Danner serves as “an indicator of the subject of identity formation”. (Juljana Gjata Hjorth Jacobsen. *Schleswig-Holstein Meerumschlungen and the Call for Nationalism: National Identity under Construction on the German and Danish Border in Selected Works by Theodor Storm, Theodor Fontane, and Herman Bang*. Dissertation: University of New Jersey, 2012, p. 122. Cf. also Carl Ewald. *Danske Droninger uden Krone, Grevinde Danner og Frederik VII*. Copenhagen: Høst&Søn, 2000.) It may be added that the Countess Danner outlived Frederick by eleven years and, once independent, used her fortune to support orphans and impoverished proletarian women. (Cf. for instance, “Countess Danner”, in: *The Danish Royal Collections, Rosenborg Castle*. <<http://dkks.dk/grevinde-danner-en>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013. Arguably, she was too independent a woman to be approved of at that time, let alone to be considered a suitable representative of the monarchy.

Wäre damals eine echt schleswig-holsteinisch denkende Persönlichkeit am dänischen Hofe gewesen, die sich auch mit der Gräfin zu stellen gewußt hätte, so wäre sicher manche Ungerechtigkeit nicht begangen worden. Denn weder der König noch seine Gemahlin wollten ungerecht sein: sie liebten die Schleswig-Holsteiner nur nicht und wußten genau, daß sie auch nicht geliebt wurden. Gegen Menschen und Länder, die man nicht liebt, ist es aber stets schwer gewesen, die Unparteilichkeit zu wahren. (AP, p. 221)

Not only personal, but *collective* disadvantage is observed to be the outcome when personal rigidity is expressed as an – in this case universally displayed – absence of diplomacy. The counterpoint, implicitly, would have been a readiness to engage in *actual*, rather than *projected* relations – Niese aptly formulates the idea of “Haß” that was “geworfen”. Such a readiness, further, is constituted as *real*/ national sentiment, which was wanting: it is seen as real because it would have served the needs of Schleswig and Holstein’s whole population, while aristocratic exclusivity was destabilising to the region. Nationalism is here therefore constellated in terms of reciprocity. The psychological-realist narrative turn, further, amounts to a deconstructive discourse, which is set against the idea of power and grandeur. The political situation is not acknowledged as an impersonal unalterable fact, but rather, is portrayed in terms of fallible, subjective human contexts, which are ultimately responsible for it. Injustices against the German Schleswig-Holsteiners, which according to Niese particularly affected her father<sup>24</sup> is interpreted as occurring not arbitrarily, but both inadvertently, and inevitably.

Niese again hones a judicious narrative viewpoint in her rueful reminiscences about the political indoctrination of Fehmarn’s children:

Unser größter Wunsch war, von der großen Welt und von fremden Menschen zu hören; wer uns etwas Schönes erzählen konnte, den liebten wir über alle Maßen. Aber diese Geschichte begann nur zu oft mit den Worten: Das war damals, als die Dänens noch nicht hiergewesen waren, oder: Gerade als die Dänens aus die Stadt zogen, usw. So konnten wir von der Politik nicht loskommen, und wir wuchsen in alles hinein, in den letzten Krieg, in den Dänenhaß, in die leidenschaftliche Liebe zu unserer düstern und für uns doch so schönen Heimat. Was wir eigentlich mit unserem Dänenhaß wollten, weiß ich nicht mehr. Den einzelnen dänisch redenden Beamten oder Lehrer haßten wir nur in sehr vereinzelt Fällen, und dann war der sogenannte Haß auch noch lau. [*sic.*] (AP, p. 223)

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Niese, “Unsere kleine Stadt”, in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, p. 11. (Henceforth: UKS.)

The “Krieg” referred to is the “Erhebung Schleswig-Holsteins” between 1848-1851,<sup>25</sup> the outcome of which was the continued assignation of Schleswig to Denmark, and of Holstein to Germany, and which led to the only temporary peace into which Niese was born. While her juvenile processing of the general anti-Danish sentiment remained undifferentiated, and contingent on actual experiences with individuals, it also sought and received substantiation at home:

Wir wollten von dem Onkel hören, der mit Weib und Kind vor den Dänen hatte flüchten müssen, oder von dem anderen, der ohne weiteres abgesetzt wurde, nur weil er Schleswig-Holsteiner bleiben wollte. Und dann war das kleine Bild des ältesten Sohnes unseres Großvaters, der in Jütland gefallen war, der stete Gegenstand unserer Fragen! (AP, p. 222)

Further, national sentiment aroused by the presence of “Renegaten”, especially an “Amtmann [...] [who] schrieb fleißig Berichte nach Kopenhagen, denunzierte auch bisweilen”, was received by children who “grüßten ihn widerwillig und standen ihm nur ungern Rede und Antwort. [...] wir machten doch einen langen Umweg, um ihm nicht zu begegnen” (AP, pp. 223-4). That the situation had a traumatic effect on the island’s Danish and German children can be deduced from Niese’s evaluation that “die politische Lage unseres Vaterlandes [warf] manchen düsteren Schatten auf unsere sonst so fröhliche Kindheit”. She here refers particularly to occasionally vehement quarrels between German and Danish children, which “die bitteresten Reuetränen” about “unbedacht den Lippen entflohenen Worten” (AP, pp. 224-5) could not mend, and which at times defied the resilience with which their friendships bridged ideologically-derived standpoints.

However, the effort to maintain if not an impartial, then at least a judicious perspective is eventually undermined because while first-hand experience forms the narrative substance, the sentiment of loyalty is derived from orally transmitted accounts of past wars and injuries in the formative, familial environment. The deep ambivalence of “Allerhand Politisches” can best be appreciated in a comparison of its two climactic

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. for instance, Joachim Weise. “Die Geschichte der Erhebung”, in: *Die Schleswig-Holsteinische Erhebung 1848-1851*. <<http://www.sh4851.de/erhebung.html>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.

moments, which are of antagonistic import, the gist of the one being an inclination to undercut political sentiment, and of the other, to endorse it. The arrival of Prussian troops is preceded by the death of the Danish king in 1863, as also by propagandist newspaper reports. A child's perspective is employed to convey the incomprehensibility of the situation: the newspapers portray "allerhand Wunderbares von Sachsen, von Hannoveranern, vom Herzog von Augustenburg, und wieder begannen die Leute vom Krieg zu sprechen" (AP, p. 225). The projected war is conveyed to German children in terms of the "freche[n] Eroberer", the "Dänen" of 1848 who "in manchem Hause herrisch Unglaubliches verlangten" (AP, p. 225). Notwithstanding her firm predisposition to view the Danes as oppressors, and the Prussians as allies, however, Niese's remembered experience of Danish troops, who arrive first, is that of "ältere Leute mit guten Gesichtern", eventually followed by a "kleine Anzahl hübscher dänischer Dragoner" (AP, p. 226) who are equally pleasing to the children. This description resonates with an earlier evaluation of island life:

Abgesehen von dem Unbehagen, das die politischen Verhältnisse mit sich brachten, hatten es die Bewohner von Schleswig-Holstein nicht schlecht. Die Beamtengehälter waren bedeutend größer, das ganze Leben viel behaglicher und gemütlicher. Man kannte weder preußische Sparsamkeit noch preußisches Strebertum, ihr Leben lang blieben die Beamten auf ihren Posten und verwachsen dadurch viel fester mit ihren Mitbürgern. Und wir Kinder brauchten nicht allzuviel zu lernen, und lernten doch genug, um nachher die berühmten preußischen Examina bequem mit leisem Erstaunen darüber, daß nicht mehr verlangt würde, bestehen zu können [*sic.*] (UkS, p. 9)

Such inconsistency between the remembered, vernacular status quo and compulsory political loyalty forms the substance of "Allerhand Politisches" up until this narrative's conclusion. The eventual arrival of the Prussians is attended by incongruity throughout. The children, unlike the Danish soldiers or even the civilian adult population of the island, are aware of the imminent conflict by giving credence to news brought by fishermen (AP, p. 228), such as having seen the approach of "kleine Kerls, mit den Hosen in den Stiefeln" (AP, p. 229), incidentally to provide an implicit comparative perspective of the Nordic and Prussian physique. The conflict ensues at dawn:

Truppweise mit gefälltem Bajonett kommen fremde Soldaten die Straße herauf. Hier und da knattert ein Schuß, ein Kommando erschallt, dann geht es wieder trab!

trab! durch unsere verschlafene Stadt. Ein dänischer Soldat stürzt bei mir vorbei nach der Schmiede, wo angeschirrte Pferde stehen; er schwingt sich auf ein Tier – da knattert es, und er sinkt lautlos zusammen. Dort sind einige halb bekleidete Dänen, die sich willenlos ergeben und den Schlaf sich aus den Augen reibend zusehen, wie indes die Preußen uns 'erobern'. Es geht weiter hinein in die Stadt, wir Kinder selbstverständlich hinterdrein. (AP, pp. 229-30)

The sudden switch to present tense, accompanied by narration that relies almost exclusively on the observation of a series of events, here heightens the human impact of the murder of the Danish soldier. The conquest continues as a quietly horrific affair that is attended by absurdity: challenge ensues only occasionally, from individual soldiers in isolation; the troops are followed by children fascinated by the spectacle. Dark humour is supplied by the narration of a Danish soldier who stands on a roof "im leichtesten Kostüm" and shoots wildly about him, "in der Erregung aber stets nach uns Kindern und nicht nach den Preußen", who, once captured, receives some "äußerst notwendige Kleidungsstücke" which are thrown at him by a Prussian soldier from the bedroom window of the house he had previously fled (AP, pp. 230-1). On the other hand, human tragedy is again emphasised when the heroism of a notably gentle Danish father of a young and universally loved family ends in his murder:

Wieder knattert es, und er bricht zusammen. Wir Kinder aber beginnen laut zu jammern: "Ach, was habt ihr getan! Das ist ja Eritzoe, der gar kein Soldat mehr ist!" (AP, p. 230)

A sense of disbelief attends this narration of chaotic events, which emphasises haplessness and human fallibility in juxtaposition with lethal force.

The import here is mockery of the idea of military heroism: it is not the Prussian conquest to which "Allerhand Politisches" at this point conspires, but to a distinct localised reaction. The first climactic moment occurs after the Prussian troops attempt deliberately to extract some bravado from the almost embarrassing proceedings:

"Habt ihr nicht noch mehr Dänen hier?" fragte einer der Preußen die umstehenden Leute, und diese nickten. [...] "Sind die Leute gefährlich?" hieß es, und man sah sich zweifelnd an. Gefährlich? Nun, es waren ja Dänen; man konnte sie immerhin wegjagen. "Nun, dann wollen wir sie wegjagen!" riefen die Brandenburger, "kommt mit und zeigt uns den Weg!" Schon setzte sich ein Trupp Leute in Bewegung, da kommt Bruder Heinrich des Weges. [...] "Jungens, wo wullt jü hen?" ruft er den Leuten zu, von denen er jeden einzelnen kennt, und einer der Angerufenen streicht



sich bedächtig das helle Haar aus der Stirn. "Ja, Heine, wir wullt den Propsten en beten wegjagen, und de annern Dänens ok! Komm mit, min Jung, dat is en Spaß!" aber Heinrich schüttelt den Kopf. "Nee, ik will nich mit' de Lüd do hebbt mi ja gor nix dahn – de hebbt ja keenen Minschen wat dahn!" Die Leute bleiben stehen und werden nachdenklich, "Dat is ja wull eegentlich ok wahr: nee, de hebbt uns gor nix dahn – dor sind ja ganz vernünftigen Kerls mit mang – nee, dahn hebbt se uns nix!" Und einer von ihnen wendet sich zu den Preußen, die diesen barbarischen Naturlauten verständnislos und ein wenig verächtlich gegenüberstehen. "Wir wollen das man sein lassen! Die paar Dänens, die noch hier sind, können for unsertwegen hierbleiben!" Und sie blieben alle. (AP, pp. 232-3)

Although Kammerhof praises Niese for being so patriotic as essentially to be indifferent to "Dänentum",<sup>26</sup> this episode is actually a covert act of resistance against nationalistic expectations. Notably, the arrival of Niese's brother Heinrich is narrated in dialect, which the Prussian soldiers cannot understand, and which attracts their disdain. His ethical consciousness is here the means of resistance; it ensues through *relationship*, conceptually the antithesis of war. Heinrich's personal knowledge of each person is key; it constitutes his psychological access to individuals who at that moment are subsumed as a "Trupp Leute" (AP, p. 232), and who therefore act without awareness either of their impending impact, or of personal responsibility. Ira Progoff observes:

When a psychological function such as thinking, feeling, etc., is in the unconscious, it is undifferentiated and it tends to fuse objects together in an unclear way. It operates by 'participation.' When an individual lives completely within the spell of the collective representations, fusing himself with the group and identifying himself with the collectivity, the images of the group dominate his unconscious. [...] He does not distinguish the ideas of his own thinking processes from the collective images – or if so, only barely – and in this condition he can hardly be said to be individualized. 'Participation' is a condition that prevails where the psychological process of differentiation has not yet taken place. 'Participation' is the characteristic of unconsciousness; differentiation is the characteristic of consciousness. [...] differentiation, which involves the breaking-up of the 'participation', means also the emergence of individuality.<sup>27</sup>

The islanders depicted by Niese in this episode are aptly described in terms of "participation". Resistant writing practice<sup>28</sup> here occurs partly because the locals, who prove vulnerable to the imposition of "collective representations", are by definition not constellated as less advanced than the highly organised Prussians, because the latter are themselves the emblem of those representations. However, the incident related by Niese is not wholly encompassed by "participation" as above outlined, due to the

<sup>26</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", pp. 16, 69.

<sup>27</sup> Ira Progoff. *Jung's Psychology and its Social Meaning*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953, p. 171.

<sup>28</sup> Donovan, *Local-color Literatures*, p. xi.

sinister import of the collectively shared emotion. It is sadistically pleasurable anticipation of domination and humiliation which is broken by Heinrich's sober opposition, that harming people who had not themselves caused harm did not constitute "Spaß". Pogroff considers the ramifications of "participation" as a state in which the individual "cannot assert that he thinks; it is rather that 'something thinks in him'":

This introduces an idea other than 'participation', namely, 'possessions' coming from the unconscious, or what Jung calls 'partial systems', capable of acting autonomously in the psyche – that is, without direction by the ego [...].

While the indigenous population on its own would not have been capable of cruelty without context, it proves vulnerable to the impetus because the idea of nationality, which is imposed on localities, is a concept predicated on the *other*. Jung identifies the problematics of negative projection:

We still attribute to 'the other fellow' all the evil and inferior qualities that we do not like to recognize in ourselves. That is why we have to criticize and attack him. [...] The world is still full of betes noires and of scapegoats, just as it formerly teemed with witches and werewolves. Psychic projection is one of the commonest facts of psychology. It is the same as that *participation mystique* which Levy-Brühl remarked as a peculiar trait of primitive man. We merely give it another name, and as a rule deny that we are guilty of it. Everything that is unconscious in ourselves we discover in our neighbour, and we treat him accordingly. We no longer subject him to the test of drinking poison [...] but we injure him by means of moral verdicts pronounced with deepest conviction. What we combat in him is usually our inferior side.<sup>29</sup>

Pogroff, in turn, terms the "scapegoat" problem a perplexing and ubiquitous phenomenon in history.<sup>30</sup> That the scapegoat, as either personal or collective repository of despicable qualities, is typically treated with an entire absence of empathy will be only too apparent from a number of historical contexts that have involved racism, ethnic cleansing, or war. While smaller in scope, the psychological dynamic of the scapegoat is present in the occurrence related by Niese. It is transformed by the

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<sup>29</sup> Carl Gustav Jung. *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. London: Ark, 1990, p. 163.

<sup>30</sup> Pogroff, *Jung's Psychology and its Social Meaning*, p. 88. – She goes on to point out the Third Reich as a historical example of what Jung terms a collective shadow projection: "It has been noted by many writers [...] that the Nazis attributed to the Jews many personality traits of which they themselves were much more guilty. We may find in this at least a partial clue to some of the ingredients that go to make up the scapegoat." (Pogroff, *ibid.*) – The psychological meaning of the term 'shadow' will be expounded in more detail in subsequent interpretations.

intervention of Heinrich, an ethically minded mediator, whose consciousness prompts the subsumed individuals to 'return to themselves'.

Heinrich, according to Donovan's view, is here "positioned on the cusp between colonizer" – the Prussians – "and colonized",<sup>31</sup> the mixed island population subject to the "Dunkelheit" which "kam aus den politischen Verhältnissen" (UkS, p. 12). Donovan reflects on the role of the author of "local-color literature" in the light of the genre's earlier writers:

The work of [Maria Edgeworth and Sir Walter Scott] – acknowledged progenitors of the local-color school – 'are explorations of colonialism, as well as the cultures of the colonized'. Both writers are positioned on the cusp between colonizer – the English – and colonized – the Irish and Scot, respectively. Scott, by virtue of education, and Edgeworth, by virtue of her privileged class status as a member of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy, understood the perspective of the colonizer. But both also, because of their status as natives to Ireland and Scotland, respectively, knew and understood the standpoint of the colonized native. To a great extent their work is devoted to articulating the latter's perspective.<sup>32</sup>

Niese was in a similar position to Edgeworth and Scott – having the advantage of both education and class,<sup>33</sup> she observes local and trans-local viewpoints, and oscillates between them. By having a protagonist play the role highlighted by Donovan, the islanders' sub-cognitive state, engendered by their identification with the abstract notion "national" is broken, and the power of individual perception recalled: it is not alien Danes who were about to be tormented, but "vernünftigen Kerls" and neighbours. Thus the vernacular constellates an imperfect, susceptible human condition to which conquest is *actually* an irrelevance, and which includes dignity and reality in its potential to negotiate and relate as individuals.

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<sup>31</sup> Donovan, *European Local-Color Literature*, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup> Liz Bellamy, quoted in: Donovan, *Local-Color Literature*, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> Niese's father was the island's pastor and the family was therefore locally prominent. According to Karl-Wilhelm Klahn, "die [...] Nieses haben eine ansehnliche Ahnenreihe: Pastoren, Bürgermeister, Verbindungen zu Caspar von Saldern (Vermittler Zarin Katharina II. Anno 1773), den Buxtehudes von Bad Oldesloe und über ihren Urgroßvater Propst Joh. H. Hammer (1771-1812) ist [Charlotte Niese] eine Nichte von Amalie Schoppe. (Cf. Karl-Wilhelm Klahn. "Charlotte Niese. Fehmarns größte Schriftstellerin", in: *Reisecenter Fehmarn. Personen von Fehmarn*. <[http://www.reisecenter-fehmarn.de/fehmarn-inselgeschichte\\_Charlotte+Niese+++Fehmarns+groesste+Schriftstellerin\\_239\\_2.html](http://www.reisecenter-fehmarn.de/fehmarn-inselgeschichte_Charlotte+Niese+++Fehmarns+groesste+Schriftstellerin_239_2.html)>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.)

In contradistinction both to local-national ambivalence and vernacular triumph, however, the narrative perspective undergoes a change once the Prussian conquest is official. The pathos of Eritzoe's murder is at first powerfully conveyed:

Wir freuten uns alle unbändig, und viele Menschen behaupteten, der fünfzehnte März 1864 sei der schönste Tag ihres Lebens. Für die Frau des ehemaligen dänischen Wachtmeisters war er das nun freilich nicht. Ihr Mann hatte sich heute zum letztenmal die blaue Uniform angezogen, um dem Dragonerrittmeister, der früher sein Chef gewesen war, Lebewohl zu sagen: er sollte den Tod darin finden. 'Der schönste Tod ist der Soldatentod!' tröstete uns der tapfere preußische Hauptmann, als wir ihn immer wieder fragten weshalb Eritzoe habe sterben müssen. (AP, p. 233)

Since it is impossible to provide the distraught children with a satisfactory answer, comfort is attempted by offering an ideologically charged one. But the ironic import of this gesture, which emphasises both the senselessness and the grief, is thereafter not developed. Instead, a sense of resignation emerges in Niese's remembered response to the family's grief:

Als ich am nächsten Tage einen Kranz hinbrachte, erschrak ich vor der Grabestille, die dort herrschte, und vor der tränenlosen Verzweiflung der Angehörigen. Damals lernten wir zum erstenmal die traurige Rücksichtslosigkeit selbst des kleinsten Gefechts kennen und empfanden es dunkel, daß die, die einen Krieg zwischen Dänemark und Schleswig-Holstein einen Bruderkrieg nannten, doch nicht so unrecht hatten. (AP, pp. 234-5)

Referring to military action in terms of its "traurige Rücksichtslosigkeit" is here a way of constructing inevitability, of summarising in order to achieve psychological distance; it signals the beginning of a shift in the narratorial attitude. The defiant affirmation that follows belies the vernacular wisdom previously presented. The real cost of the conflict is dismissed and the Prussian action represented as self-defence: the "trotzige kleine Dänenreich hatte zu lange die Rolle des Kain gespielt, als daß sich Abel, trotz mancher Schmerzen, nicht aufjubelnd hätte losreißen sollen" (AP, p. 235). Arguably, the sentiment voiced by Woolf about autobiographical writing, that "it is only by putting it into words that I make it whole; this wholeness means that it has lost its power to hurt me" here ensues to ambivalent effect. Since it entails a denial of the episode's real import, the narrative stature is thereby diminished.

The superimposition of the Old Testament, while in keeping with Niese's religious familial background, appears as a strangely inappropriate interjection that eclipses the impression of the child's experience. The adult narrator concedes to nationalistic sentiment in a disappointing finale:

Mit den Dänen zog sie davon, die dänische Zeit, ein neuer Tag brach an in der Geschichte Schleswig Holsteins. Und so lange Nord- und Ostsee an unsere Küsten schlagen, so lange unsere Buchenwälder grünen, und über unseren Marschen der Sturm pfeift, so lange wollen wir nun bleiben: 'Up ewig ungedeeht!' (AP, 236)

The emotive tone, in the context of this narrative as a whole, is here unconvincing; the previous denial of nationalistic sentiment causes it to appear contrived and melodramatic. Militaristic action is suddenly implicitly applauded, and its *actual* effects, previously the point of focus, are marginalised in favour of a sense of triumph. Arguably, the author here succumbs almost inevitably to "participation" of a wider socio-historic context that would have been hostile to any consequential "differentiation": it is likely that, had Niese attempted to present such an account, her voice would have been censored.

This first chosen sketch examines nationalism and politics, in order to deal with important problematics that characterise late nineteenth-century Europe generally, and Wilhelmine society in particular. Nationalistic sentiment, in these memoirs, is apparent as a localised response to the larger context of Bismarck's machinations to secure the dominance of Prussia in Germany – the perspective of Fehmarn residents in "Allerhand Politisches" is restricted to those long-standing regional conflicts that existed in their collective memory. National sentiment is here constellated idealistically, since tolerance is emphasised. Thus the Danes who remained on Fehmarn

gewöhnten [...] sich bald an das neue Regiment, das gegen die Dänischgesinnten des Landes mit großer Nachsicht verfuhr und sich wohl hütete, alte Wunden wieder aufzureißen. Nur die Beamten, die den frommen Wahn hegten, der augustenburgische Herzog würde jetzt sein rechtmäßiges Erbe antreten, mußten bald zu ihrem Schaden erfahren, daß es nicht so gemeint war." (AP, p. 233)

This commentary may be taken as an attempt at harmonisation by glossing over Prussian aggression, or as an expression of magnanimity in victory – in either case, it is thematically attributable to the narrative’s psychologically inferior discourse. An implicit note of satisfaction, however, does become apparent from the narratorial censure of “Beamten” whose wish for a more domineering status quo was to remain an unfulfilled “Wahn”. This observation contributes to the mitigation of the one-sided conclusion, along with the Danes who stayed in consequence of Heinrich’s intervention, since exuberantly used first-person plural “wir” and “unser” of the final sentences necessarily encompasses them. Whether this resolution overshadows the overall ambivalence constellated in this vignette is debatable. Niese repeatedly emphasises in her memoirs that it is not exposure to birth and death in their natural forms that constituted childhood trauma, but rather, that “alle Dunkelheit” of her childhood emerged “aus den politischen Verhältnissen” (UkS, p. 12). The fault here does not lie with the Danes: “wie viel haben wir Kinder von [Politik] hören müssen; ein unnötiger Haß wurde in unseren jungen Herzen großgezogen!” (UkS, p. 7) The overall thematic focus of this vignette may be summarised as the tension between a simply lived social equilibrium and the superimposition of hegemonic ideals on the vernacular status quo. If its ultimate realisation is psychologically somewhat disappointing, the problems presented nevertheless are pertinent.

“Um die Weihnachtszeit” and “Geburtstag”: Vernacularity, Transcendence and the Sacred

Charlotte Niese’s memoirs constitute an approach that was considered “entschieden neu” for *Heimatkunst* at that time, one which served as a model for later writers:

Daß “Aus dänischer Zeit” beim Erscheinen Eindruck machen mußte, wird jedem Leser ohne weiteres verständlich sein. Das war vor allem neben der Form die Neuheit des Gebotenen, ein Sieg der angebahnten Heimatkunst. Daß Helene Voigt-Diederichs mit “Schleswig-Holsteiner Landleuten” einen solchen Erfolg zu

verzeichnen hatte, ist gewiß auf Charlotte Nieses Vorarbeit zurückzuführen. Es war  
entschieden neu, mit solchen Kindheitserinnerungen an die Öffentlichkeit zu  
treten.<sup>34</sup>

The sketches encompass topics such as birth, death, and local customs, perceptions and tensions. In addition, they portray the *kind of* community life in operation, and the types of mental attitudes that implicitly constellated value and taboo from a materially privileged vantage point. In view of the methodological perspective of this study, the way in which *otherness*, and conversely, *inclusivity*, is portrayed is here of particular interest. “Local-color” narration in the absence of preoccupations with political and national concerns will therefore be the next focus. Two vignettes, which respectively are concerned with Christmas and with birthdays, are particularly suited to this aim: religious rituals express perceptions of sacredness and intrinsic value, while localised customs explicate vernacularity as it manifests in the least reflected and modified way. Both “Um die Weihnachtszeit” and “Geburtstag” were published in *Aus dänischer Zeit*.<sup>35</sup> As previously mentioned, however, “Geburtstag” also appeared in *Die Gartenlaube* in 1893.<sup>36</sup> The *Gartenlaube* version will here be given preference because it is known to have been readily available to a mass readership.

### “Um die Weihnachtszeit”

“Um die Weihnachtszeit” consistently employs a child’s perspective, the effectiveness of which varies with the three themes that consecutively form this narrative’s focuses. The droll narration of juvenile Christmas preoccupations and wishes, which appears at the beginning, seems to aim simply to entertain with novelty effects. An imposed adult viewpoint dominates in this style of narration, which belittles puerile affect: the reader is

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<sup>34</sup> Kammerhof, “Charlotte Niese”, p. 64.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Niese, “Um die Weihnachtszeit”, in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, pp. 459-88 (henceforth: UdW); Niese, “Geburtstag”, in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, pp. 425-455.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Niese, “Geburtstag”, in: *Die Gartenlaube*, No. 51 (1893), pp. 871-74; No. 52, pp. 887-91. (Henceforth: G.)

invited to smile indulgently at childish foibles, such as the formulation of unrealistic wishes, or despair over imperfectly made gifts (cf. UdW, pp. 460-2). The narrative tone, rather than having an enlivening effect and recreating childish perceptions, here instead constructs artifice, an impression that is strongest at the conclusion of this first phase:

Um die Weihnachtszeit wurden in der ganzen Stadt Schweine geschlachtet, und zwar in der frühesten Morgenstunde. Aber so nötig die frischen Würste zum Weihnachtsfeste gehörten, die Schweine trugen doch nicht gern zur Weihnachtsfreude bei. Sie weckten die ganze Nachbarschaft mit ihrem unvernünftigen Geschrei auf und konnten es niemals über sich gewinnen, ihr Schicksal etwas freundlicher zu tragen. Nun – einmal wurden sie doch still, und wir hatten sie schon vergessen; es war ja bald Weihnachten. (UdW, pp. 462-3)

Arguably, the pseudo-humorous commentary that the dying animals' screaming lacked reason, along with the limitation of affect to an implicit sense of satisfaction that acoustic disturbance ceased at the moment of their death, is not effective as, or even in lieu of, a young child's perspective. Although Fehmarn's children of the mid nineteenth century were not sheltered from birth and death, which were regular and integral aspects of life, the viewpoint here offered is too callously anthropocentric to reflect a child's affective experience. In this instance, the narrative, rather, conforms to a ubiquitous Western European cultural situation in which common consensus asserts that the sentience and value of animal life are sufficiently immaterial as to require no attitudinal effort, such as respect or compassion in the act of killing.

The second thematic focus of "Um die Weihnachtszeit" commences with a reference to "Rummeltöpfe" (UdW, p. 464), one of the old local customs for which Kammerhof praises Niese's narratives as "kulturgeschichtlich höchst wertvoll".<sup>37</sup> The child's perspective is far more successful in this episode than in the first, since it relies on narration of remembered events and actions without the addition of quaint commentaries. The custom of "Rummeltöpfe" has strongly pagan connotations: it involves wearing a disguise and the conversion of an earthenware pot into an acoustic

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<sup>37</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", p. 66.



device capable of emitting a low and penetrating sound. A “Knabenschar” thus equipped moves from house to house during the evenings before Christmas to extract treats or money from residents (UdW, p. 464). They produce the characteristic “Rummeln” with their instruments while chanting or singing a traditional rhyme in regional dialect, which enigmatically alludes to local eighteenth-century trade with Holland. The continued simple narration and situational focus achieve both the sense of a lived tradition, and genuine humour:

Alle Jungen hatten mit lauter Stimme gesungen, ohne sich vom Fleck zu rühren, und dabei rummelten sie so eifrig, daß es großartig zu hören war. Als sie das Lied zu Ende gesungen hatten, stürzten sie wie auf Kommando in den Hausflur des Bäckers, um gleich darauf mit wildem Geschrei zurückzulaufen. Die Bäckerfrau schien keine Lust zu haben, ihren Wünschen nach einem halwen Daler [*sic.*] zu entsprechen. Sie mußte schon hinter der Tür gestanden und auf die Eindringlinge gewartet haben, denn mit einem großen nassen Besen fuhr sie den Sängern ins Gesicht [...]. Nach einer Minute befanden sich alle Rummeltopfbesitzer prustend und lachend in wilder Flucht auf der Straße [...]. Die Rummler hatten sich durch die aufgeregte Bäckerfrau nicht abhalten lassen, einige Häuser weiter ihren Gesang wieder zu beginnen. Dieses Mal öffnete sich bald ein Fenster, ein Mann begann mit ihnen eine scherzhafte Unterhaltung, ob sie auch nötig hätten zu betteln, und reichte ihnen schließlich Gebäck und kleine Münze. (UdW, pp. 465-6)

Since the tradition of “Rummeln” permits of behaviours normally out of bounds, it renders the woman’s hostility ineffective, and even supportive of the youngsters’ intention to appear in league with the supernatural. Altercation becomes exciting, rather than distressing due to the temporary suspension of morality and social convention. It is worth considering the contexts of this psychological manifestation a little more closely. Carnavalesque traditions have a long history and have been practised in widely different settings. Their cultural significance has traditionally been symbolically to undermine the perceptual, normative status quo. Mirth, as it manifests here, has had a particular role to play. Lachmann *et al*/point out that

folk culture appears periodically as a culture of laughter by means of an ensemble of rites and symbols, a temporarily existing life-form that enables the carnival to take place. By contrast, the principle of laughter rises above and transcends the objects at which it is temporarily aimed: official institutions and the sacral. [...] In laughter there occurs a ‘second revelation’; a ‘second truth’ is proclaimed to the

world. [...] The truth of the second revelation is the truth of the relativity of the truth, the truth of crisis and change, the truth of ambivalence.<sup>38</sup>

The significance of carnivalesque traditions becomes further apparent from a consideration of their relationship to religion. Robert Avens articulates the problematics of Christian morality in psychological terms:

In the canons of collective morality (outlined in the Mosaic law and the Christian commandments) the terms 'good' and 'evil' are used as opposites: a person is enjoined to practise brotherly love, to strive for perfection and to avoid hate, intolerance, and egoism of all sorts. These exhortations have produced a split between light and darkness in the psyche, leaving Western man with only two alternatives: either to surrender to his shadow, viz., to acknowledge himself to be a sinner who needs to be saved by the divine agency, or to make the impossible attempt to rid himself of the dark side altogether.<sup>39</sup>

Instead of a one-sided life-attitude, which in practice means either "to become the plaything of the forces of the unconscious" or to be involved in "endless hypocrisy and deceit" by repressing the "other side", the unrecognized and disowned, animal-like personality rejected by the ego", Carl Gustav Jung proposes a "principle of growth toward wholeness [...] that necessarily involves a creative relationship between the dark instinctive side of man's nature and the light of consciousness."<sup>40</sup> Thus, as previously highlighted, the human psyche functions as a

self-regulating system in which a compensatory mechanism operates between the conscious and the unconscious parts. [...] It means that every one-sided attitude inevitably produces its opposite in an autonomous attempt to restore a balanced attitude.<sup>42</sup>

This view is useful to a consideration of carnivalesque traditions. Variations of such celebrations were practised within the Christian church itself for some five hundred years: the "Feast of Fools",<sup>43</sup> for instance, belonged "to the deacons, the priests, the choir-children and the subdeacons":<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Renate Lachmann/Raoul Eshelman/Marc Davis. "Bakhtin and Carnival: Culture as Counter-Culture", in: *Cultural Critique*. No. 11 (Winter 1988-89), pp. 123-4.

<sup>39</sup> Robert Avens. "The Image of the Devil in C.G. Jung's Psychology", in: *Journal of Religion and Health*. Vol 16, No. 3 (Jul. 1977), p. 203.

<sup>40</sup> Avens, "The Image of the Devil in C.G. Jung's Psychology", p. 205.

<sup>42</sup> Avens, "The Image of the Devil", p. 198.

<sup>43</sup> Ingvild Salid Gilhus observes that the "The Feast of Fools took place roughly in the period from the end of the eleventh to the sixteenth century." (Ingvild Salid Gilhus. "The Feast of Fools in France", in: *Numen*. Vol. 37, Fasc. 1 (June. 1990), p. 25.)

<sup>44</sup> Gilhus, "The Feast of Fools in France", p. 26.

Masks and monstrous visages (*larvae et personae*) recur in the sources. The participants grimaced and made contortions. They used unclerical costumes like female clothes and clothes of panders and minstrels. They had flowers in their hair and sometimes they appeared with their clothes inside out. There were even accusations of priests appearing naked. During the feast they distorted the words and the songs of the liturgy; primarily in the form of *proses et farsurae*, additional chants or interpolations into the text, varying from being harmless to being directly improper. Wanton songs (*cantilenas inhonestas*) are also mentioned. [...] The feast is characterized by its *reversals*. *Reversal* designates all types of opposite or contrary behaviour.<sup>45</sup>

That a deep psychological need towards balance motivated such religious counter-contexts is evident from their invariably context-specific manifestations, since “their meanings are always produced in an interplay with the religious systems they are traversing”<sup>46</sup> and practices “varied through the centuries and in the different churches”.<sup>47</sup> Ingvild Gilhus observes further:

The meanings created by the interplay between carnivalesque forms and the Catholic religion are transient and passing, and have not left tangible relics in the shape of a new alternative ideological system. This lack of new ideology is in accordance with the playful character of the feast and with its lack of an exterior goal.<sup>48</sup>

Carnavalesque traditions, therefore, have over the course of their long history existed for their own sake, rather than for any *conscious* ulterior motive, such as social change. As demonstrated in *Um die Weihnachtszeit*, they manifested in a mid nineteenth-century Protestant – Lutheran – situation, as well as in earlier Catholic contexts. The effect was psychological release beyond catharsis in a personal sense. The constellation of an inner juxtaposition to hegemonic values with an accompanying periodic outward expression also prevents the formation of one-sided or fundamentalist attitudes in individuals, as well as in the collective situation.

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<sup>45</sup> Gilhus, “The Feast of Fools in France”, p. 27. – As Gilhus points out, the use of female clothes, for instance, is such a reversal, because “the Catholic hierarchy is a male hierarchy. The vestments of the priests are a main expression of their status. [...] when [they] change their vestment for female clothes, a comical contrast is made between hierarchy and lack of hierarchy, between the spiritual and physical, and between soul and body. In this connection the female appears as an unstructured opposite. She is conceived of as representing disorder, nature and the body.” In addition, “the sensory level, connected with the body, is [...] one of the most important features of the feast. An illustration of this point is the censuring with old shoes. [...] Incense serves a double purpose, it gives a pleasant smell and simultaneously drowns the smell of human bodies. The sweet fragrance points to a higher, unbodily reality. Censuring with old shoes, on the contrary, brings, in condensed form, a stench of human bodies.” (Gilhus, *ibid.*)

<sup>46</sup> Gilhus, “The Feast of Fools in France”, p. 24.

<sup>47</sup> Gilhus, “The Feast of Fools in France”, p. 27.

<sup>48</sup> Gilhus, “The Feast of Fools in France”, p. 25.

In the context of the “Rummeltöpfe” of Fehmarn, it is significant that an essentially carnivalesque tradition was maintained directly in tandem with the ultimate Christian festival, Christmas, perceived by Charlotte as an “irdische Herrlichkeit” which could only be surpassed “von dem Tage, wo wir an die dunkeln Pforten der Ewigkeit klopfen würden, und die Tür des Himmels sich öffnen würde” (UdW, p. 482). An observer of distinctly Pagan rituals and images at the Basel carnival processions points out that while the “significance and origin of ancient traditions becomes obscured”, it is striking that in spite of epistemological changes “some traditions persist – because they are so deeply rooted in his subconscious.”<sup>49</sup> “Rummeln” does not pose a directly articulated challenge to the church, but instead is illustrative of a cultural situation in which religious morality has not achieved, and does not aspire to gain, an absolute hold on the psychic life of the community. It suggests a status quo in which hegemonic values do exist, yet are undermined by the peripheral and significant coexistence of antithetical, vernacular factors. For instance, the equable man’s query, “ob sie es auch nötig hätten, zu betteln”, demonstrates his acknowledgement of the exteriority of the custom, but not any intuitive cognition of the value of masquerade. He does, however, acquiesce to the custom, which he rewards. The woman’s hostile reaction, on the other hand, is suggestive of fear of a dark unknown reality, which inadvertently confirms the psychological substance of the tradition.

The man’s recognition that youths from wealthier households may be the “Rummler” is, additionally, an implicit allusion to a concurrent local practice that overtly appeals to the bourgeois moral consciousness of charitable obligations, which are derived directly from Christian teachings: congratulating during the last few days before Christmas involves the poorest inhabitants begging *enmasse* at the doors of the wealthy and receiving delicacies, as well as money. The two customs engender a degree of competition for material goods between the respective practitioners (cf. UdW, p. 478),

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<sup>49</sup> Lucille Armstrong. “The Carnival at Basel, Switzerland, Spring 1981”, in: *Folklore*. Vol. 95, No. 1 (1984), pp. 54-6, esp. p. 56.

but they are qualitatively distinct. The “Rummeltopf” custom contains elements also present in the festival “Hallowe’en” in its presentation, through disguise, of ambivalent and potentially sinister spirits that ask to be pacified, a custom that is of course also older than the eighteenth-century trade of its ritual song. “Rummeln”, however, is likely originally to have been symbolically referenced in the winter solstice, the shortest or darkest days of the year, to echo reversal-type celebrations that date back to the ancient world, such as Saturnalia.<sup>50</sup> Although the man’s conscious attitude displays no differentiated knowledge in the narrated episode, the continued coexistence of this pagan-connoted practice in tandem with the Christian festival does suggest a resistant practice which implicitly defies the schizoid morality inherent in patriarchal religious dogma.

It is noteworthy that the third theme of this narrative, possibly unintentionally, traces the social significance of such a hybrid conceptual situation. Fehmarn’s children’s notable freedom to roam and express their natural inclinations within flexible rather than rigid social margins is demonstrated in Charlotte and brother Jürgen’s return home in the dark from a friend’s birthday celebration, and their immediate fascination and joining of the “Rummlern” (UdW, pp. 466) when they happen upon them. The narrative’s third episode ensues with their violent expulsion from the frolickers once these become cognisant of the intruders, and the latter’s passionate resolve to form their own ‘Rummler-cell’ thereafter. The necessary accoustic devices are procured through servants, who thus appear to be more in tune with the old customs than are the upper classes. The vernacular is again strongly to the fore:

Wenn wir ins Freie wollten, gingen wir eigentlich immer zuerst auf den Kirchhof. Er lag mitten in der Stadt, und über ihn führte uns immer unser Weg, wenn wir vom Elternhause zu unserem Großvater gingen. Im Sommer saßen wir unter seinen großen Linden und machten Ketten aus den langen Stengeln des Löwenzahns, und mit dem Totengräber verband uns zu allen Jahreszeiten eine innige Freundschaft. (UdW, p. 469)

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<sup>50</sup> Cf. for instance, Jayne Lutwyche. “Did the Romans Invent Christmas?”, in: *Religion and Ethics*. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/0/20617780>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.

When Charlotte, temporarily left alone in the graveyard on her own, is robbed of her “Rummeltopf” by a wild local boy, the narrative’s psychological theme is taken up to remarkable effect. It is the “Totengräber”, to whom she appeals for comfort, who reveals the boy’s circumstances to her. Abandoned in infancy by his father, a sailor, he was given into the care of an aunt, “de Olsch” (UdW, p. 472) after the death of his mother. Life with this aunt entails deprivation – “seine Kleidung bestand eigentlich nur aus Lumpen, und er war außergewöhnlich schmutzig”, while his hands are “blaugefroren” (UdW, p. 475) – as well as hunger and regular beatings. When Charlotte and her brother Jürgen go to look for this boy on the following day, their deliberations whether together to beat him up for the robbery are cut short when they find him playing alone:

Er kam auf uns zu und hielt mir den zerbrochenen Topf vor die Augen. “Das war ein schlechten Rummelpott!” sagte er geringschätzig. “Konnt auch nich das geringste vertragen! Als ich mir gestern abend mit Fite Schulz prügelte, smiß ich ihn das Ding an’n Kopp, und das ging gliedertwei! So’n schlechten Pott hab ich lang nich gesehen. (UdW, pp. 474-5)

Franz Horn’s purely self-centred and amoral stance about the theft is met neither with reprisal nor with contempt and exclusion, but leads to a conversation about Christmas. The offer of a new pair of trousers is refused by Franz because “wenn da ein Loch ein kommt, krieg ich bloß Prügel von die Olsch. Da is mich mein alte lieber!” (UdW, p. 476) The Christmas present of his choice is “daß ich die Ohlsch, was mein Tante is, mal tüchtig nurchneien [durchprügeln] kunnt” (UdW, p. 476), to allude to the dark side of island life, a social stratum to which violence and deprivation are the norm. An invitation to Franz to turn up for Christmas dinner in the Niese household’s kitchen at five o’clock on 24<sup>th</sup> December sees him arrive at three o’clock, to be followed by ‘the Ohlsch’ at four o’clock:

Wir waren überrascht, denn unseres Wissens hatte sie kein Mensch eingeladen; Franz aber bemerkte mit vollen Backen kauend: “Ich hab ihr eingeladen, weil daß sie so gern kommen wollt. Sie is ja auch mein Tante und kann fluchen wie’n Schipperknecht! So löffelte die Ohlsch bald still und emsig und schien sich auf langes Bleiben eingerichtet zu haben. [...] (UdW, pp. 479-80)

The aunt's lack of propriety in turn reaches incongruous proportions when repeated helpings do not appear quickly enough:

Sie erhob ihre Stimme und sah sich mit blitzenden Augen um – 'was is das hier für'n Wirtschaft? Köksch, wo bleibt mein Teller? Willst mir narren? Meinst daß ich hier sitz für nix und wieder nix, und daß ich tothungern will, bei labendigem Leibe? Köksch! Wenn du mich nich flink was gibst, denn slag ich dich die Knochens in Leib zwei!' Sie gebrauchte noch einige sehr kräftige Redewendungen mehr und beruhigte sich erst, als wieder ein gefüllter Teller vor ihr stand, Franz aber sah mich mit strahlenden Augen an. "Kann sie nich fein schelten? Ich sag, da kommt kein Mann gegen!" (UdW, p. 481)

The sense of imposition is intensified still further when Franz subsequently bursts into the Niese family gathering, perceived by Charlotte as so festive as to resemble paradise (cf. UdW, p. 483). He comments on her rendition of the traditional "Weihnachtslied", the learning of which had been one of her major preoccupations before Christmas:

Du kannst dein Gesang man schlecht", sagte er zu mir. "Hast dich ja woll gar kein Mühe bei gegeben!" Ich war tief gekränkt – er aber steckte die Hände in die Taschen, und mit seinen strahlenden Augen unverwandt in die Lichter der Bäume blickend sagte er mein Weihnachtslied ohne jeden Anstoß auf und Jürgens Lied gleichfalls. Ihn störte gar nichts – weder die ungewohnte, für sein Auge doch glänzende Umgebung, noch die fremden großen Leute, die um ihn herumstanden und ihn betrachteten. Als er geendet hatte, wandte er sich wieder zu Jürgen und zu mir. Das hab ich in Schule gelernt und denn bei die Ohlsch aufgesagt. Sie kann die Dingers auch! (UdW, p. 483)

This style of narration, which Jung terms "unmittelbar", achieves this narrative's strongest effects. Pathos is created in the implicit addition of Franz's *psychological* deprivation to an already apparent scenario of poverty. He has no sense of propriety or boundaries; he steals, eats "in solchen Mengen [...] daß unsere Köchin beinahe weinte" (UdW, p.479), issues unwarranted invitations and bursts upon a private family sphere. The culmination of his destitute internality, however, appears in his defence against the perception of value in such symbolic embodiments of the sacred as the recitation of the "Weihnachtslied". His usurpation betrays a subliminal cognisance of a dearth of inner substance at home and he declares the poems to be "Dingers" defined in the mere act of repetition, which he finds himself and his Ohlsch to be not only equally, but better capable of, defiantly to oppose the sense of deficiency that attends

his own home. The sense of suffering, which his conscious defiance denies, however, is thereby made manifest for the reader.

The reputed exclusivity of the Wilhelmine bourgeoisie in the urban centres, which might extend charitable tokens yet see the proletariat resolutely as an *other*, which is a potential contaminant,<sup>51</sup> is belied by Fehmarn society as depicted in “Um die Weihnachtszeit”. A reversal of the received societal image appears in the behaviour of the younger Niese children, who, despite knowing that Franz’s aunt was violent and foul-mouthed, “suchten die nähere Bekanntschaft der Ohlsch” by sitting on the table and staring at her before upbraiding her for her treatment of Franz. Secondly, the gratitude of the aunt manifests in weekly visits after the Christmas meal, visits that see her bullying the cook so that the latter “förmlich Angst vor ihr hatte”, and which continue until “der Junge [...] groß und stark [wurde]” (UdW, p. 484). While social status is here upheld, it does not effect any conceptual or practical dislocation of ‘undesirable social elements’, with whom, instead, a working relationship is maintained.

The narrative concludes with a summary of Franz and his aunt’s subsequent trajectory: he suddenly disappears, aged thirteen, to go to sea “wie so viele unserer Insulaner” (UdW, p. 484), to add a further oblique reference to the island’s poor. Despite his aunt’s confident expectations of his return, Charlotte, upon visiting the town as an adult, finds her pining after her nephew, who by then is known to have drowned while trying to rescue a fellow sailor who had fallen overboard (UdW, p. 486), a heroic gesture which the *Ohlsch* disapproves of. The narrative ends, however, by ultimately rehabilitating the degenerate character through her grief:

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<sup>51</sup> Volker Ullrich refers to “reformpolitisches Stückwerk” in the early 1890s, which was designed to reconcile “die industrielle Arbeiterschaft mit dem Obrigkeitsstaat”. When this failed, from 1896, the “vorherrschende[] Doktrin wurde [...] daß alle Sozialpolitik nur zum Sozialismus führe und man der Sozialdemokratie nur beikommen könne, indem man sie bekämpfe.” (Cf. Volker Ullrich. *Die nervöse Großmacht 1871-1918. Aufstieg und Untergang des deutschen Kaiserreichs*. Frankfurt: Fischer, 2010, pp. 189, 191.)



“Nu” – sagte sie halblaut vor sich hin – “vielleicht nimmt uns’ Herrgott meinen Jung sein Dösigkeit nicht übel – nu is doch wohl auch Wihnachten in Himmel, und vielleicht darf er da ein büschen rummeln!” – – Ich glaube es beinahe. (UdW, p. 488)

An overall integrative mentality therefore emerges that provides an alternative viewpoint to that implicitly dominant in the stratifications of politically and socially divisive urban centres. “Um die Weihnachtszeit” is far from constellating an ideal society, yet it does depict a co-operative one. Neither is the overall effect *idealistically* conservative, in spite of the nostalgic tone prevalent in the first part of the narrative. Rather, a kind of organic, imperfect-yet-workable coexistence emerges.

### “Geburtstag”

This narrative is fairly subtitled “Humoreske” in the *Gartenlaube* version, since the successful naïve narration achieves levity throughout without adding an impression of quaintness. Community cohesion is the most differentiated theme: it achieves the portrayal of the local mentality, mainly through adult-child relations, depicts socialisation processes through which the island’s children mature and shows how insider-outsider perceptions are constructed and maintained. An additional, peripheral yet noteworthy gendered discourse appears, which manages to touch on sexual morality. The sketch is essentially eponymously titled; it revolves around birthdays within the community, which, according to Charlotte’s grandfather who was usually entreated for the necessary funds to procure gifts, entailed “jede Woche einen anderen Geburtstag” (G, *Gartenlaube* No. 51, p. 871). The narrative climax finally relates one particular birthday that proves to have a transformative effect for an estranged married couple.

The socialisation of children becomes apparent in their awareness of the requirement to engage in formalities in contradistinction to their real sentiment when a celebration commences:

Man that natürlich, als wäre einem die Gabe ganz einerlei, als freute man sich nur über die Anwesenheit des geliebten Freundes, im Stillen aber rechnete man doch schon aus, ob man wohl ebensoviel Geschenke bekäme, wie man Spielgenossen eingeladen hatte. (G, p. 871)

Staged nonchalance and talk of the weather, “wie die Großen es immer thaten” is, however, shortly betrayed by the ripping open of presents, one after the other, “während der Geber dicht dabei stand und meistens erzählte, wie viel das Geschenk gekostet hatte” (G, p. 871). When Charlotte is persuaded to buy a defective item by the local shopkeeper, which promptly breaks, the prospect “vor versammeltem Volke mit leeren Händen zu kommen” felt unbearable (G, p. 872), to hint at an early sophisticated social awareness. When her dismay is noticed by a newcomer to the island, the thematic focus switches to the cohesion of a community in which the idea of strangers posing threat to children has negligible status: the newcomer, a retired captain, invites Charlotte to come to his house to choose an alternative present from among his collected curiosities.

A mild parody of a less favourable aspect of the close-knit community is progressively constructed from this point by focusing on the propensity of locals to gossip, a parody that conspires towards this narrative’s most comical turn. A stuffed shark, a trophy that had once almost killed the captain (G, p. 872) which smells “beinahe so wie Herrn Metzger’s *Eau de Cologne*, das ich voriges Jahr zum Geburtstag bekam”<sup>52</sup> (G, p. 872) hangs on the wall of his entrance hall. When Charlotte and brother Jürgen<sup>53</sup> subsequently compete at home about who has the most poignant piece of information

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<sup>52</sup> “Herr Metzger” is here not the butcher, but the quizzically named local general grocer, who sells cheap and at times low quality goods. (Cf. also, G., p. 872.)

<sup>53</sup> Jürgen is the sibling most often mentioned in these memoirs. The references are to “Jürgen Anton Benedikt Niese”, who was born in 1849 and who subsequently became the well-known classical scholar known simply as “Benedikt Niese”. Their close relationship provides corroboration for Charlotte’s birth year as having been 1851, and not 1854: she is unlikely to have had the type of close sibling relationship narrated with a brother five years older.

about the enigmatic newcomer, he relates that he had heard that the shark “hat dieses Mannes Frau aufgefressen” (G, p. 873). Their “Kindermädchen” Line, who is privy to the conversation, contributes a chaotic effect to an episode that manages to reveal real intent behind affectation:

Sitzt die Frau da noch in Haifisch und hängt von Boden herab? O du mein Heiland, wie einmal schrecklich! Und den Mann, was sag’ den Mann dazu? Is das nich so’n hübschen kleinen dicken Mann, der hier mannichmal spazieren geht? Ja, was nich allens passieren thut! Und Geld soll er auch haben, ein ganzen Berg Geld! Nich?” Ob Kapitän Weber Geld hatte, wußten wir nicht; der Gedanke beschäftigte uns auch weniger als der, daß seine Frau noch in dem Haifisch sitzen könnte. (G, p. 873)

The juvenile viewpoint here effectively manages divergent thematic material simultaneously, referring overtly to the extremes to which the gossip of a small community can tend. It subtly discusses a domestic servants’ proactive hunt for a marriage partner, a theme that also appears elsewhere in *Aus dänischer Zeit*,<sup>54</sup> and implicitly represents the nature of children who function confidently within a community that does not conspire to effect any impedence of their natural curiosity and imaginations. Rather, their high status on the island is indicated by their consistent use of “du” rather than “Sie” when addressing adults as integral aspect of the vernacular status quo. Notwithstanding the nanny’s entreaty that they remain and keep her company, they demonstrate their freedom by absconding:

Der nächste Augenblick sah uns schon auf dem Wege zum Norderende, und bald klopfen wir an des Kapitäns Thür. Sie war dieses Mal verschlossen; er öffnete sie aber gleich und begrüßte uns freundlich. “Nun, meine Kinder, womit kann ich dienen?” Wir aber sagten kein Wort und starrten unverwandt den großen Fisch an. “Nun?” sagte er noch einmal und ich faßte mir ein Herz. “Sitzt sie noch drin?” fragte ich halb verschämt. Der Kapitän sah mich verwundert an. “Ich meine deine Frau!” fuhr ich eifrig fort. “Der Fisch hat sie ja aufgefressen!” Herr Weber räusperte sich ein wenig und schob seine Zipfelmütze auf dem Kopf hin und her. “O, was die Leute doch snacken! Und denn schicken sie so’n unschuldiges Kind zu mich, daß es mir ausfragen soll! Als wenn ich darüber sprechen möchte, was doch nicht angenehm is, an zu denken! (G, pp. 873-4)

His utterance, taken as confirmation of his wife’s unusual demise, masks the matrimonial discord that had led to their estrangement and separation, artfully to

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<sup>54</sup> Cf. for instance, “Die Reise ins Kloster”, in Niese, *Aus dänischer Zeit*, pp. 331, 336.

introduce the theme of sexual morality, a sensitive subject for a bourgeoisie whose morals were derived from the Protestant faith.

The theme of sexual morality is begun with the budding romantic liaison between Line and the captain, to whom the former only refers wistfully as “so’n netten Mann” in the company of her charges. The youngest of the Niese brothers, a barely verbal infant, iterates:

“Furchtbar netten Mann!” [...] “Morgen netten Mann mich Zucker geben. Line Kuß!” letztere Worte wiederholte er wohl zehnmal und lachte dabei so schelmisch, bis Line dunkelroth wurde und wir sehr aufmerksam wurden. (G, *Gartenlaube* No. 52, p. 887)

Charlotte’s subsequent witnessing of an unambiguous rendez-vous between the would-be lovers just prior to coming face to face with the captain’s wife, who had arrived on the island to trace his whereabouts, accuse him of infidelity *and* recommence their marriage, leads to an altercation between the child and Line. The episode maximises on the misunderstanding between the knowing adult and innocent juvenile perspectives:

“Ich weiß was Neues!” rief ich nun, und Line sah mich starr an. “Is woll was Rechtes!” meinte sie dann in einem Tone der Verachtung, der mich stets reizte. “Ist auch was Rechtes!” erwiderte ich trotzig. “Kapitän Webers Frau sitzt gar nicht im Haifisch – ” “Als wenn ich das geglaubt hätte!” unterbrach sie mich höhnisch. “Die alte Frau liegt irgendwo in den südländischen Ocean tot und begraben!” “Sie wohnt in der kleinen Bauerstraße in Altona und ist gar nicht tot!” schrie ich triumphierend; “und heute ist sie beim Propst, und als ich sagte, daß du und der Kapitän euch eben immerlos geküßt habt – ” Weiter kam ich nicht, da Line, die viele Kräfte hatte, nicht allein mich, sondern auch die Brüder aus der Thür warf, wobei es viel Geschrei und Gelächter gab. Denn eine kleine Prügelei ist doch immer das Allerschönste im Leben. (G, pp. 889-90)

Notably, while the altercation reveals Line’s mortification, the manhandling and laughter, themselves representing physicality, also constellate continued negotiation, rather than taboo. Thus Line remains in “schlechter Laune” until the “Commis beim Krämer sie jedesmal durch uns grüßen und dann zum Ball einladen ließ” (G, p. 890) to imply a robust, indigenous sub-culture in which the libido of women was vital, rather than passive. An incidental point of socio-historic interest here appears in the mention of a “Commis”, an early term for “Angestellter” – the impending liaison between

domestic servant and commercial employee suggests a relatively pliant social order in which vertical movement is not systematically ruled out. This amounts to a profound difference to urban centres, which, as Martino points out, severely restricted social mobility at that time.<sup>55</sup> Since this portrayal appears solely in the context of Line's ability to comfort herself about a lost prospect, the effect is one of inadvertent authenticity, rather than of deliberation. The reference to boisterous children who are enlivened by physical altercation, further, subtly adds to the impression of unhampered libido by association, while simultaneously providing a vivid character portrait of the child Charlotte. In respect of this episode's main thematic strand, naïve narration skilfully handles sexuality and romantic attachment, proceeding entirely by allusion and without censure.

When Charlotte manages to involve Captain Weber in a conversation during a chance meeting after the presence of his wife at "Norderende" puts paid to their social visits, a psychologically opaque insider-outsider scenario emerges. He refers to his spouse as "ein von die Strengen" who "mag mir ja eigentlich nich leiden, weil ich mannichmal ein büschen leicht war –" (G, p. 890), and who on account of his transgressions had thrown him out of the marital home. His integration into island life had subsequently been facilitated by the local gossip about her demise, interest in the occurrence being sustained by the fact that she had been a native, and is therefore perceived to belong to the island: the circumstance makes him an insider by extension, and hence a welcome curiosity. The collective mentality here appears as sufficiently insular and unused to outsiders not to include the integration of settlers within the realm of possibilities. Within the bounds of this insularity, however, it conspires towards a kind of organic acceptance of even extreme differences across social strata and generations. The couple's reconciliation is ultimately effected by Charlotte's insistence on the necessity to celebrate his wife's imminent birthday, to which he responds by coaxing

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<sup>55</sup> Cf. for instance, Alberto Martino. *Die deutsche Leihbibliothek. Geschichte einer literarischen Institution (1756-1914)*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1990, p. 299.

her into being the gift-bearer with the promise that the consumption of the present, “ein Pfund Schokolade” [sic.] (G, p. 890), would be shared. When the two Niese siblings Charlotte and Jürgen reluctantly arrive to congratulate the wife, they are accosted by the distrustful woman’s verbal volleys and accusations. Her coldness turns out to be permeable, however, when they assert that they were acting on her husband’s instructions, who “mochte es dir nicht selbst geben – ich weiß nicht warum, aber er mochte nicht!” The shrew turns out to be a neglected woman:

“Von mein Friedrich?” sagte sie zweifelnd. “Würklich? Hat er an mein Geburtstag gedach und schenk mich was? Oh, wo lange is es her, daß er mich was schenkte! Und nu denk er an mein Geburtstag, wo keiner an dachte, all die langen Jahrens! (G, p. 891)

The narrative’s consequentially happy end may be interpreted as unduly simplistic or harmonising – it extrapolates the need for marriage partners to be forbearing and to accept imperfection, rather than expecting ideals, to iterate a traditional Christian message. Arguably, however, the observation is also psychologically astute and is not actually contingent on doctrine.

The late nineteenth-century bourgeois sexual double standard in respect of men and women is again modified by the narratorial acknowledgement of Line’s right to be proactive in her search for a partner, implicitly to counter the previously discussed extreme positions that were being fostered in Wilhelmine society in this respect. Frau Weber restates her marriage vow at the narrative conclusion – an emotive turn that is offered as a memory, rather than as an idealised fictional scenario. The narrative perspective here aims to deflect from a potentially didactic and melodramatic import: the marital reconciliation proceeds peripherally to the child’s viewpoint, which continues to be focalised. Consequently, it is the apparent backdrop to siblings concerned with receiving an equal share of chocolate and wine, and who compete for primacy to the point of physical scuffles and verbal squabbles. Frau Weber’s reprimand, at this point, fails any ironic intent, since it is insufficiently subtle – an impression of moralistic narratorial sincerity arises instead. This weakness in narrative style, however is

immediately modified by the genuinely comical narration of Jürgen's alcohol-induced benevolence after he pilfers a second glass of wine and becomes "heiter" (G, p. 891) and emotive as brother and sister leave the reconciled couple – the children's access to alcohol, offered to them as a treat by non-related adults, does not relate a puritanical society, but rather one the religious morals of which do not dominate local traditions and down-to-earth judgements. "Geburtstag" is a light-weight "Humoreske", which, however, in addition to a unique societal portrait, contains the conciliatory mentality already observed in "Um die Weihnachtszeit". In terms of resistant practice, its impact would have included, if subliminally, the depiction of a collective mentality that tended to encompass and integrate, and to avoid any ultimate breakdowns of relationships on the basis of irreconcilably polarised positions: a general socially-conformist gist is here permeated with a non-authoritarian and negotiative stance intrinsically set against the Wilhelmine brand of patriarchalism, which German society of this era is perhaps too one-dimensionally remembered for.

"Großvaters Schreiber": Integrative Tendencies and Resistant Practice

The liberal gist of nineteenth-century Fehmarn social life is perhaps best borne out in a further vignette, entitled "Großvaters Schreiber".<sup>56</sup> Skilful handling of innuendo, again resulting from the gulf between adult and child perceptions, here results in thematic material being taken a step further than in the vignettes already outlined. Charlotte's grandfather, as "Justizrat",<sup>57</sup> held a central position in the community of Burg, the principle town of Fehmarn, to which the vignettes relate. Narration proceeds chronologically and by means of alternating a detailed, situational focus with a wide narratorial perspective, conveys an impression both of the secretary's life and of Fehmarn social mores. One of the dominant traits of the "Schreiber", who is a complex

<sup>56</sup> Niese, "Großvaters Schreiber", in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, pp. 77-94. (Henceforth: GS)

<sup>57</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", p. 12.

character and himself has high status in the town, is his fondness for a local speciality, the “Lütjenburger Schnaps”, intake of which makes him prone to relate “die interessantesten Geschichten” (GS, p. 78). The content of these stories is classified by Jürgen according to quantity of liquor consumed: up to three glasses gives rise to moralistic reminiscences deemed disappointing by him and sister Charlotte; they preferred to hear about “die Irrfahrten seiner Jugend- und Mannesjahre” (GS, p. 78), which attended the consumption of up to eight glasses. The secretary’s resolve to provide the children with instruction in keeping with a Protestant moral ethic, such as “wie er sich immer so artig und brav betragen [...] und stets ein Musterknabe gewesen sei” (GS, p. 78) dissolves with increasing inebriation to reveal a young rogue and intrepid young “Bierbrauer und [...] Kopenhagen Kaufmann” who becomes a mildly misogynistic cynic on account of having been led on by a young girl (GS, p. 79). Further, when Rasmus’s alcohol intake had exceeded eight glasses, he flowed over in longing for romance, weepingly to relate “rührende Geschichte[n]” about his “jetztige Braut” who is “so schön, so reich, so vornehm, und sie liebte Rasmus so glühend, daß ihm die Worte bei der Beschreibung dieser Leidenschaft ausgingen” (GS, p. 79). Story-telling here proceeds effectively: introduction of this bride in maudlin terms intimates that all may not be as it seems with her who loves Rasmus to the point that she turns stiff and her legs begin to shake upon seeing him (cf. GS, p. 80), and who yet remains absent. Thematically, these child-adult relations introduce a role model who is rough-and-ready rather than exemplary, and the impression of a moralism that is both sincere and ‘bolted on’ consequently arises. Both these themes acquire import from narrative context: it is the pastor’s children<sup>58</sup> who act as arbiters of the quality of the secretary’s stories. The development of young characters uninhibited by repressive doctrinal means therefore ensues at the community’s religious centre: parents and grandparents do not intervene in the childrens’ relationships with other adults. Simultaneously, a

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<sup>58</sup> As previously mentioned, Niese’s father was Fehmarn’s pastor. (Cf. Kammerhof, “Charlotte Niese”, p. 12. Cf. also “Charlotte Niese. Fehmarn’s größte Schriftstellerin, <[http://www.reisecenter-fehmarn.de/fehmarn-inselgeschichte\\_Charlotte+Niese+++Fehmarns+groesste+Schriftstellerin\\_239\\_2.html](http://www.reisecenter-fehmarn.de/fehmarn-inselgeschichte_Charlotte+Niese+++Fehmarns+groesste+Schriftstellerin_239_2.html)>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.)



quasi-alcoholic adult remains closely associated with the locally exemplary Niese family to engender a sense of inclusivity that exceeds the notion of studied tolerance.

In “Großvaters Schreiber”, portrayal of the local mentality proceeds by narration of mutual interactions that highlight specific qualities, capacities and values on the one hand, and through the depiction of vernacular beliefs and habits on the other. One of these habits precipitates a set of circumstances that leads to the narrative’s climax, while at the same time constructing a subtext that deepens the overt meaning of the story to a surprising extent. The local children’s custom of obtaining water from a pump in a forecourt adjacent to Rasmus’s “Schreibstube”, using their “Mützen und Papiertüten” as receptacles highlights two distinct types of formative experience. When Charlotte inadvertently ruins her “Strohhut” in this way, she presses the “unglückselige[] Eigentum auf die Pumpenspitze” with the intention “es ruhig dort sitzen zu lassen” (GS, p. 82) but subsequently has to answer to her relatives, who insist on the item’s return. The necessity to return to the forecourt in the dark prompts mention of the vernacular belief in ghosts: a white lady is supposed to haunt the pump at night, a belief which is “felsenfest” (GS, p. 82) in the children. This ghost does not bear on the main story development and at first appears as an anecdotal annexe. At the narrative’s conclusion, however, the child’s perspective is relinquished for the adult Niese’s deliberations, which concern a visit to the same place years later:

Ich [...] ging hinüber in den Hof, aus dem die Pumpe aber verschwunden war. Unser Spielplatz war ein Kohlgarten geworden, und als ich mich nach unserm Hausgeist erkundigte, hieß es, daß selbst diese Dame verschwunden sei und sich gar nicht mehr blicken lasse. Wenn aber sogar die Gespenster das Geschäft des “Spökelns” aufgeben, wie langweilig muß die Welt geworden sein! (GS, pp. 93-4)

In psychological terms, a stark comparison is established in this passage: the forecourt is on the one hand simultaneously an informal meeting ground for schoolchildren, who made “den Hof zu gewissen Stunden recht lebhaft”, and a place in which they develop their concepts of authority and negotiation: Rasmus, who found their use of the pump unnecessary (GS, p. 81), regularly attempts to chase them away,

ein Unternehmen, das dem großen, unbeholfenen, meist ein wenig angetrunken  
Manne nur unvollkommen gelang, und das dann allgemeine Fröhlichkeit erregte.  
(GS, p. 83)

The idea of excessive or impersonal authority that is experienced as overwhelming and which therefore sets up the kind of psychological crippling delineated by Heinrich Mann,<sup>59</sup> is here nowhere in sight: an adult with a tendency to undermine himself is instead perceived by the children. With this perception, imperfectly exercised, conditional authority becomes, firstly, a felt reality, and secondly, a conceptual possibility transferable to other social (and political) contexts. An example of such a conceptual predisposition has already been seen in the discussion of “Allerhand Politisches”, where the political situation between the Danish monarch and the “Holstein Ritterschaft” and “höhere[n] Beamten” (AP, p. 219) is narrated solely in terms of its psychological fallibilities, rather than in terms of power, partiality or glamour. Insofar as the psychological scenario depicted is a characteristic formative experience, its likely outcome is resilience and a capacity for continued relatedness, rather than a propensity either to defiance or to blind obedience, since the “consistency and regularity of interactions”<sup>60</sup> is one of the crucial conditions of internalised values.

At least as significant as the type of psychological conditioning indicated is what the ghost herself, who “huschte mit drei Lichtern in der Hand bald hier bald dort herum” (GS, p. 82), represents. She signifies an imaginative, rather than a barren intellectual and purely material world – in other words, access to a state of consciousness not dominated by rationalism. Without this imaginative world, life is “langweilig”, psychologically a state of dissociation. “Großvaters Schreiber” concludes with a conscious comparison of childhoods:

Da kommen die Kinder aus der Schule! Wie vernünftig gehn sie, und welch einen  
Packen neuer Schulbücher tragen sie! – Ihr Armen! Wir waren lange nicht so klug;

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<sup>59</sup> This problem, which has already been alluded to, is discussed in detail in “Social Transformation in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*”, pp. 241-2.

<sup>60</sup> Snyder, quoted in: Lindsay St Claire. “When is Gender a Handicap? Towards Conceptualizing the Socially Constructed Disadvantages experienced by Women”, in: Suzanne Skevington/Deborah Baker (eds). *The Social Identity of Women*. London/California et.al.: Sage Publications, 1989, p. 131.

unsre Bücher waren lange nicht so schön; und wir hatten es dennoch viel, viel besser! (GS, p. 93)

The children's gait, which is "vernünftig", here implies a sober manner that lacks spirit; the "Packen Schulbücher" are the means with which their minds are trained into logical, rather than intuitive habits, and their *a priori* assumptions become pragmatic and utilitarian, rather than creative or altruistic. The ghost therefore symbolises not only the freedom from regulations which Niese experienced in her childhood, but also a conceptual freedom, in which cause-and-effect logic is not the ultimate parameter of worth. Niese therefore implicitly refers to a psychic environment in which both potentiality and actuation of individuality depends on a relationship between the conscious mind and the unconscious psyche, which communicates "psychic events whose ultimate nature is unknowable",<sup>61</sup> a relationship that a homogenising, "theoretical, unitary, formal and scientific discourse" prevents.<sup>62</sup>

The issue of a dominant rational discourse was also raised by one of the most prominent exponents of the earlier form of German regional writing, the *Dorfgeschichte*. The qualitative, susceptible nature of human consciousness is an overriding concern in Jeremias Gotthelf's novel *Zeitgeist und Berner Geist*.<sup>63</sup> It depicts the consequences of Enlightenment discourse tenets as an attitude in which "der Mensch ist Gott",<sup>64</sup> the idealistic potential consequence of which is a state in which, temptingly, "alle leben [...] wie die Prinzen"<sup>65</sup> and "persönliche Freiheit in allen Dingen, die Erlösung aus dem Aberglauben"<sup>66</sup> is the status quo, and which in actuality consists of an exploitative, materialistic culture, that facilitates *individualism*, rather than *individuality*.<sup>67</sup> Jung's discussion of the rationalistic mind-set is particularly relevant in this context since it bears out consequences that are implicit in the conclusion of "Großvaters Schreiber".

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<sup>61</sup> Carl Gustav Jung (ed.) "Approaching the Unconscious", in: *Man and his Symbols*. London: Aldus, 1978, p. 4.

<sup>62</sup> Donovan, *European Local-Color Literature*, p. xi.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Jeremias Gotthelf. *Zeitgeist und Berner Geist*. Berlin: Julius Springer, 1852.

<sup>64</sup> Gotthelf, *Zeitgeist*, p. 193.

<sup>65</sup> Gotthelf, *Zeitgeist*, p. 332.

<sup>66</sup> Gotthelf, *Zeitgeist*, p. 414.

<sup>67</sup> Further a detailed discussion of these terms as antagonistic, cf. "Individuality and Gender in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*", pp. 283-90.

Due to the complexity, and possibly, unfamiliarity of his hypotheses, I will present them in some detail. In a discourse on the role of symbols in human consciousness, he raises the phenomenon of a psychological loss of substance in modernity:

Nowadays, when we talk of ghosts and other numinous figures, we are no longer conjuring them up. The power as well as the glory is drained out of such once-potent words. [...] To be more accurate, the surface of our world *seems* to be cleansed of all superstitious and irrational elements. [Italics added.]<sup>68</sup>

The “ghost”, in this context, is a numinous figure, the origin of which is the *collective* unconscious.<sup>69</sup> Additionally, Jung signals that, although reason, when acting as dominant aspect of consciousness causes a loss of inner substance, it is not actually effective in its sanitisation of superstition, since a “realistic picture of the human mind reveals many [...] primitive traits and survivals, which are still playing their roles just as

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<sup>68</sup> Jung, “Approaching the Unconscious”, p. 86.

<sup>69</sup> The concept of the collective unconscious is a principle point of divergence between Freudian and Jungian analytical psychology. Avens provides a succinct exposition: “The unconscious is composed of two parts: one contains forgotten, repressed material and subliminal impressions and perceptions; Jung calls this sphere the personal unconscious; it closely corresponds to the Freudian conception of it. The collective part of the unconscious does not include personal acquisitions but only contents that are more or less common to all human beings, perhaps even to all animals. It is a sort of common psyche of a suprapersonal kind that is the foundation of every individual psyche. The collective unconscious is the product of generations past, the deposit of the experiences to which our ancestors have been exposed: it contains the wisdom of ages, our innate potential, which emerges from time to time in the form of ‘new’ ideas and various creative expressions.” (Avens, “The Image of the Devil in C.G. Jung’s Psychology”, p. 198.) The idea of “compensation”, attributed by both Freud and Jung to the unconscious, is also fundamentally divergent. Erich Neumann observes: “the unconscious is a living psychic entity which, it seems, is relatively autonomous, behaving as if it were a personality with intentions of its own. At any rate it would be quite wrong to think of the unconscious as mere ‘material’, or as a passive object to be used or exploited. Equally, its biological function is not just a mechanical one, in the sense that it is merely complementary to consciousness. It has far more the character of compensation, that is, an intelligent choice of means aiming not only at the restoration of the psychic equilibrium but at an advance towards wholeness. The reaction of the unconscious is far from being merely passive; it takes the initiative in a creative way, and sometimes its purposive activity predominates over its customary reactivity. As a partner in the process of conscious differentiation, it does not act as a mere opponent, for the revelation of its contents enriches consciousness and assists differentiation. A hostile opposition takes place only when consciousness obstinately clings to its one-sidedness and insists on its arbitrary standpoint, as always happens when there is a repression and, in consequence, a partial dissociation of consciousness.” (Erich Neumann. *Depth Psychology and a New Ethics*. New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1969, p. 17.) It may seem controversial that Jung found the “common psyche [as] foundation of every individual psyche” to include a predisposition to moral behaviour as “psychic fact. As the regulator of action, it corresponds to a preformed image, a pattern of behaviour which is archetypal and deeply embedded in human nature.” (Carl Gustav Jung. “Foreword”, in: Neumann, *Depth Psychology*, p. 15.) Shared experience, however, is in this context a relativistic phenomenon, as his further exposition bears out: “moral law [as pattern of behaviour which is archetypal] has no fixed content; it represents the specific form which any number of different contents may take” (Jung, “Foreword”, p. 15.) while “the integration of the personality is unthinkable without the responsible, and that means moral, relation of the parts to one another [...]” (Jung, “Foreword”, p. 13.) In the absence of the possibility of absolutistic answers, he adopts a pragmatic attitude to moral dilemmas: “in spite of individual variation, they will exhibit certain regular features which make it seem possible to abstract a limited number of rules. I do not, myself, think that any of these rules are absolutely valid, for on occasion the opposite may be equally true. That is what makes the integration of the unconscious so difficult: we have to learn to think in antinomies, constantly bearing in mind that every truth turns into an antinomy if it is thought out to the end. All our statements about the unconscious are ‘eschatological’ truths, that is, borderline concepts which formulate a partially apprehended fact or situation, and are therefore only conditionally valid.” (Jung, “Foreword”, p. 14.)

if nothing had happened during the last 500 years.”<sup>70</sup> He compares a type of consciousness not subject to Enlightenment tenets, which remains imbued with a symbolic awareness, with the type that is governed by rationalistic assumptions. Referring to the life-attitude of indigenous peoples, he finds that their symbolic perception

gives them ample space for the unfolding of personality and permits them a full life as complete persons. Their plight is infinitely more satisfactory than that of a man in our own civilization who knows that he is (and will remain) nothing more than an underdog with no inner meaning to his life.<sup>71</sup>

In a strangely prophetic turn, Jung goes on to align loss of substance with lack of stature by observing that “a sense of a wider meaning to one’s existence is what raises a man beyond mere getting and spending.”<sup>72</sup> Further, the rationalistic enterprise is ultimately self-defeating:

Modern man does not understand how much his ‘rationalism’ (which has destroyed his capacity to respond to numinous symbols and ideas) has put him at the mercy of the psychic ‘underworld’. He has freed himself from ‘superstition’ (or so he believes), but in the process he has lost his spiritual values to a positively dangerous degree. His moral and spiritual tradition has disintegrated, and he is now paying the price for this break-up in worldwide disorientation and dissociation. [...] We have stripped all things of their mystery and numinosity; nothing is holy any longer.<sup>73</sup>

In the depth-psychological view, the relegation of matter to a mechanistic concept means that the world, or reality, is defined by the “limited ego-thoughts of man; the immense emotional energy [...] vanishes into the sand of an intellectual desert.”<sup>74</sup>

Notably, this sentiment is acknowledged as the motivating force behind the “Nietzsche cult” of the 1890s German avant-garde<sup>75</sup> by Harry Graf Kessler:

The desert, to which every Messiah belongs, was in our hearts; and suddenly, like a meteor, Nietzsche appeared [...]. The way in which Nietzsche influenced, or more precisely possessed, us cannot be compared with the effect of any other contemporary thinker or poet [...] His impact was more encompassing, deeper, and

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<sup>70</sup> Jung, “Approaching the Unconscious”, p. 86.

<sup>71</sup> Jung, “Approaching the Unconscious”, p. 76.

<sup>72</sup> Jung, “Approaching the Unconscious”, p. 78.

<sup>73</sup> Jung, “Approaching the Unconscious”, p. 84.

<sup>74</sup> Jung, “Approaching the Unconscious”, p. 85.

<sup>75</sup> For a detailed discussion of the late nineteenth-century Nietzsche cult in Germany, cf. “Individuality and Gender in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*”, esp. pp. 301-11.

more mysterious. His ever-growing echo signified the eruption of *Mystik* into a rationalized and mechanized time.<sup>76</sup>

Jung's observations are in this case borne out in terms of an intense psychic hunger, which the "desert" of a "rationalized and mechanized time" had given rise to – even the metaphor used in these unrelated accounts coincides. That Niese's conclusion resonates with the ramifications of a major cultural development is therefore apparent – the tone, rather than the content of the two memoirs that is at variance: Kessler couples a series of metaphors with emotive verbs and adjectives to emphasise the impact of an influence that purported hope of escape from a discourse experienced as suffocative; Niese instigates an imaginary dialogue to strike a sligher, plaintive note that foregrounds the sense of loss of real substance for illusory gain. The expressed hunger for an alternative, present in both these reminiscences, itself mounts a degree of resistance, since by being recognised, dominant consciousness precepts become a contingent, rather than sub-cognitive experience of absolute, incontestable values. Jung's interpretation of the supremacy of reason as a patriarchal construct, rather than as progress, starkly highlights the continuing relevance of both writers' observations. He points out that as ruling value, reason assumes the conquest of nature:

Man is bound to follow the adventurous promptings of his scientific and inventive mind and to admire himself for his spendid achievements. At the same time, his genius shows the uncanny tendency to invent things that become more and more dangerous, because they represent better and better means for wholesale suicide. In spite of our proud domination of nature, we are still her victims, for we have not even learned to control our own nature. Slowly, but, it appears, inevitably, we are courting disaster.<sup>77</sup>

The pertinence of this assessment has increased, rather than diminished in the decades since it was made. Niese's standpoint is offered in an unassuming, almost self-limiting manner and appears in a small-scale autobiographical sketch, yet as a *psychological* vignette has transcendent communicative capacity. This is not to imply that she was, or need have been, fully cognisant of its entire significance. Rather, it is

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<sup>76</sup> Harry Graf Kessler. *Gesichter und Zeiten: Erinnerungen*. Berlin: Fischer, 1962, pp. 229, 243.

<sup>77</sup> Jung, "Approaching the Unconscious", p. 91.

an instance where an intuitively formulated surmise encompasses a darkly realistic wider import that belies the nostalgic appearance.

Aside from its discourse dimension, “Großvaters Schreiber” provides socio-historic points of note, which are accessible through the story’s overt development. When Charlotte approaches the pump in the dark to retrieve the straw hat that still crowns it, a close perspective is enlisted to create immediacy:

Was aber bewegte sich neben der Pumpe? Es war nicht die weiße Frau; ein ganz in dunkle Gewänder gehülltes Wesen stand dicht neben Rasmus Fenster, und dieser selbst hatte sich so weit aus eben diesem Fenster herausgelehnt, als es nur eben ging. Mit beiden Armen hatte er die Gestalt umfaßt, küßte mehreremal und sehr laut ein ihm zugewandtes Gesicht und flüsterte dabei mit gerührter Stimme einige Worte, deren Sinn ich nicht verstand. [...] Ich nahm meinen Hut und zog mich leise zurück. Keiner der zwei Liebenden hatte mich bemerkt [...]. (GS, p. 83)

Briefly constellated suspense, which promises further complications, given that the local children’s forwardness has previously been well-established, introduces the theme of bourgeois sexual morality. As with the depiction of the lively romantic sub-culture in “Geburtstag”, the gulf between adult and child perceptions is used as a technique to make this sensitive theme communicable. The witnessed event, which involves a local woman known to Charlotte and Jürgen, prompts them to resort to the old, rather than new testament to solve the mystery of the secretary’s two brides: they recall that “Abraham [hatte] zwei oder drei Frauen gehabt, und daß auch Jakob erst Lea und dann Rahel geheiratet habe” (GS, p. 84). Their simple acceptance of “Mamsell Hansen” as an *additional* spouse leads Charlotte to expound on the virtues of the absent bride to “Mamsell Hansen” while visiting the latter, and leads to the disappointed lover’s distraught departure from the town, and subsequently, to the secretary’s increased inebriation. When Charlotte additionally introduces the topic of the love triangle to her entire family at dinner (cf. GS, pp. 87-91), uproar ensues: “zu Anfang meiner Rede war bei Tisch eine große Stille entstanden, nun sprachen alle durcheinander und sagten zu mir, Kinder dürften nicht so viel erzählen, das schicke sich nicht” (GS, p. 91). The adults’ consternation is not designed to be particularly

effective on account of its anxious avoidance of the insinuation. Such censure as does ensue, moreover, is rendered moot when Charlotte, already distracted by the arrival of dessert, cannot understand “weshalb der Onkel so furchtbar lachte, und weshalb ich ihm später noch einmal erzählen mußte, was ich mit Rasmus und mit Mamsell Hansen erlebt hatte” (GS, p. 91). Both the incoherent gist of the adults’ response and the presence of an incorrigible adult, who disperses moral dismay with outright mirth, are indicative of a sexual morality not quite fettered by repressive standards. Gary Stark refers to a – European-wide – “unprecedented obsession with and fear of sex during the latter half of the nineteenth century”<sup>78</sup> to trace the connection between nationalism and sexual politics:

Nationalism [...] significantly broadened the modern discourse on sex. The rise of the nation-state brought with it a new interest in the size and health of a nation’s population, which was regarded as the basis of national prosperity and (military) power. Since the manner in which individuals made use of their sexuality affected marriage patterns, family life, birth rates, and even the health of young military recruits, sex became a public issue and a focus of social concern [...]. To guard the national future and fortune, the nineteenth century state or its semiofficial agents intervened to restrict and organize individual behavior and enforce conformity of manners and morals.<sup>79</sup>

The chief narrative time of “Großvaters Schreiber”, around 1860, coincides with the beginnings of official suppressive moves, which, while hardly the *causal* factor in the development of contemporaneous sexual attitudes, did serve to intensify normative restrictions.<sup>80</sup> In the dinner table scene narrated above, at which both the wider family and secretary are present, the reaction affords a glimpse of a mentality subject to an older cultural legacy:

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<sup>78</sup> Gary D. Stark. “Pornography, Society, and the Law in Imperial Germany”, in: *Central European History*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Sep. 1981), p. 203. – Stark notes that this international preoccupation was eventually crystallised in an international agreement in 1910, “signed by Germany and fourteen other nations as part of an international antivice crusade, [which] pledged all the signatories to exchange information about the international trade in pornography and to cooperate in identifying and prosecuting international dealers.” (Stark, “Pornography, Society, and the Law in Imperial Germany”, p. 218.)

<sup>79</sup> Stark, “Pornography, Society, and the Law in Imperial Germany”, p. 204.

<sup>80</sup> Ann Taylor Allen highlights the official suppression of sexuality in the *Kaiserreich* through censorship moves instigated by right-wing parties. Their aim was to outlaw any discussion of issues “which ‘undermined the values of bourgeois society, especially the family [...]’” between 1874 and 1894, notably the “Lex Heinze” of 1892 and 1897, and the “Umsturzvorlage” of 1894, which were also backed by “Sittlichkeitsvereine”. (Anne Taylor Allen. *Satire and Society in Wilhelmine Society. Kladderadatsch & Simplicissimus 1890-1914*. Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, p. p. 142.) A modified version of the “Lex Heinze”, which nevertheless made it “far easier to declare a work obscene”, was finally passed in 1900. (Stark, “Pornography, Society, and the Law in Imperial Germany”, p. 217.)



Respectability, nationalism and liberalism were the bourgeois strata's three greatest bequests to the nineteenth century. [...] sexual continence distinguished the *Bildungsbourgeoisie* and wealthy merchants from the licentious and frivolous nobility.<sup>81</sup>

The culture of sexual continence appears as sufficiently relaxed not to constellate taboo in its avowal. Porousness is here an attribute that characterises both personal expressions of libido and a relatively open social stratification – as highlighted previously in the context of simple “Kindermädchen” Line’s romantic sphere, which includes a sea captain and an *Angestellten* (cf. G, No. 51, p. 887; No. 52, p. 890). The attribute also becomes visible in a further sketch, when Charlotte and Jürgen are told about forty-year-old “Kammerjunker” Christine [*sic.*], who marries a “feine Partie” from Kiel, a successful businessman, who appears to be a funeral director.<sup>82</sup>

An indication of the extent to which this social permeability involves the bourgeoisie itself is one of the remarkable features of “Großvaters Schreiber”. The narrative maintains a cheerful gist when the two would-be lovers are ultimately reconciled:

Mamsell Hansen verliebte sich dem Schreiber jene glühende Braut, die das Zittern bekam, sobald sie erfuhr, daß dieses entzückende Wesen schon lange verheiratet war und von Rasmus nur aus der Entfernung angebetet wurde. Wie sich die Versöhnung der Liebenden machte, weiß ich nicht; sie kam aber zustande, und etwa acht Jahre später führte Rasmus seine letzte Liebe zum Altar, nachdem sein Brautstand niemals veröffentlicht und doch von allen anerkannt worden war. (GS, p, 92)

The narrative solution here achieves a good-humoured effect, partly through insinuation, and partly through a hint of incongruity: Rasmus was given to unrealistic dreams about an idealised, absent and adoring woman to avoid the psychological risk and more mundane reality of an actual marriage for another eight years after

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<sup>81</sup> Hull, “The Bourgeoisie and its Discontents”, p. 248. Ernest Bramsted’s detailed study traces the psychological dynamics of the *Bürgertum* back to the eighteenth century, a time when “the aristocracy and the despotic rulers of the petty states possessed might, but the middle-class had right. The one commanded prestige and glamour, the other virtue and morality [...] the middle-class boasted of its modesty, honesty and diligence as virtues in contrast with the aristocratic vices of frivolity, arrogance and lack of principle.” (Ernest Bramsted. *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes in Germany. Social Types in German Literature 1830-1900*. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, p. 35.)

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Niese, “Die Reise ins Kloster”, in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, p. 336. – The anecdote, which is told by a kitchen servant in whom the children confide during their holiday stay at the convent, refers to the husband’s profession as “Leichdornenoperator und Zahnausreißer [...] mit’n offnes Geschäft” (ibid.). In a similar vein, the kitchenmaid Sophie herself had been “zweimal verlobt”, an observation empathetically endorsed by Charlotte: “unsre Mädchen waren auch sehr viel verlobt, und dann kam da doch nie was nach, wie sie sagten” (ibid.).

Charlotte's naïvely uttered revelations. It is the real bride, however, who is an extraordinary character especially in the bourgeois context of this narrative. She is ambivalently treated: on the one hand unprepossessing of appearance, "klein, dick und besaß einen ansehnlichen grauschwarzen Schnurrbart um den sie alle größeren Jungen beneideten" (GS, p. 85), she also has a "gutes Gesicht" and is a host who shows "große[] Freigebigkeit" (GS, p. 86). Further, she is simultaneously depicted as deeply caring and as subject to questionable ideals:

Sie hatte eine Leidenschaft für Menschen, die böse Finger oder die Rose hatten; dann verband oder 'besprach' sie das kranke Glied und gab alle Medizin umsonst, so daß sie sich unter der dienenden Klasse eines großen Zuspruchs erfreute. Vor Jahren war einmal ein sogenannter Gesundheitsapostel, Ernst Mahner mit Namen, im Städtchen erschienen; zu seinen Hauptjüngerinnen hatte Mamsell Hansen gehört. (GS, p. 85)

Emphatic narratorial distancing from the idea of alternative cures and healing is effected by intimating that their espousal is contingent on gullibility; it is only the "dienende[] Klasse" that lauds Mamsell Hansen's efforts. Yet the term "Gesundheitsapostel" with disciples is also sufficiently ambiguous not to extend to outright censure. The allusion references one of the most notable reform movements of nineteenth-century Germany. Its originators, Vinzenz Prießnitz (1799-1851) and Johannes Schroth (1800-1856), farmers from Silesia, became famous for effecting natural cures that ignored "die Erkenntnise der modernen Medizin".<sup>83</sup> The term "Naturheilkunde" had become generally recognised by the mid nineteenth century – its advocates saw in it an answer to modernity's "Verfallserscheinungen":

Naturwissenschaft und Technik, Industrialisierung und die veränderten Lebensbedingungen einer Gesellschaft, die durch Urbanisierung und den Beginn des Massenkonsums geprägt war, verlangten, wie man glaubte, nach einer Rückkehr zu naturgemäßen Lebensweisen. Die Krankheiten galten als Folgen der als negative empfundenden Umwelteinflüsse, die der Zivilisationsmensch allein mit diätetischer Reinheit (u.a. auf vegetarischer Basis), mit Wasseranwendungen, Bewegung, Licht- und Luftbädern, mit Massage, Hypnose und Suggestion, d.h. durch natürliche Heilreize zu bekämpfen hatte.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Diethart Kerbs/Jürgen Reulecke (eds.) *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen 1880-1933*. Wuppertal: Hammer, 1998, p. 77.

<sup>84</sup> Kerbs/Reulecke, *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen*, p. 77.

“Naturheilkunde” constituted a recognisable single phenomenon insofar as its various forms were “immer Ganzheitsmedizin”, and became a movement “als sich einzelnde Laienbehandler daran machten, Vereine zu gründen, welche ihre Lehren popularisieren sollten”.<sup>85</sup> The scope of the movement can be gleaned not only from the social status of its followers, but also, on the one hand, from its trajectory, and on the other, from its longevity. Vinzenz Prießnitz and Sebastian Kneipp’s enterprises serve as an indication of all three factors:

Die Zahl der Kurgäste wuchs von 45 im Jahre 1829 auf damals schon beachtliche 1700 nur zehn Jahre später. Sie stammten aus allen sozialen Schichten und Berufsgruppen und reichten von einfachen Bauern und Handwerkern über Vertreter des akademisch gebildeten Bürgertums bis zum europäischen Hochadel. Ähnlich liest sich die Erfolgsgeschichte Sebastian Kneipps, die sich ein halbes Jahrhundert später – und in ihrer Dimension um einiges umfangreicher – abspielte. Der ehemalige Dorfpfarrer machte mit seiner Wassertherapie, die bald an vielen anderen Orten von seinen Anhängern verbreitet wurde und noch heute Erfolg hat, aus dem allgäuischen Wörishofen einen weit über die deutschen Grenzen hinaus bekannten Kurort, der 1920 zum bayerischen Staatsbad erhoben wurde.<sup>86</sup>

Durability here indicates these exponents’ commitment and impact, as well as the scale of a collective need for alternatives, since arguably, success is required to maintain sustained development.

While mainstream, conservatively inclined bourgeois thinking about the movement’s more progressive healing precepts remains uncertain, undoubtedly, “Hypnose und Suggestion”, as well as a vegetarian diet would have been components espoused only by small minority. “Großvaters Schreiber” provides clues about the bourgeois perception – outright censure and partiality are likewise ultimately avoided, to suggest a concessionary cognisance of the movement’s high status, as well as deep reservations about the conceptual challenges it presented. The intimation that Mamsell Hansen’s interest is relevant only to the less educated and hence gullible “dienende Klasse”, for instance, is an undue relegation, as the movement’s actually

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<sup>85</sup> Kerbs/Reulecke, *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen*, p. 80. - Saxony eventually took the lead by providing a “Centralverein” in 1872 that by 1877 became the “Dachverband” for the whole of Germany. (Kerbs/Reulecke, *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen*, *ibid.*)

<sup>86</sup> Kerbs/Reulecke, *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen*, p. 80.

heterogeneous fellowship evidences. Arguably, it is an attempt at suppression motivated by misgivings about physical liberation:

Auf den Befehl dieses Mannes hatte sie jeden Morgen ein kaltes Bad genommen und war dann ohne jede Bekleidung im Garten spazieren gegangen, damit die Sonne auf ihren ganzen Körper wirken könne. Selbstverständlich war dieser Spaziergang immer in aller Hergottsfrühe gewesen; aber die bösertige Jugend des Städtchens war noch früher auf den Beinen gewesen, sogar das Stadtoberhaupt hatte sich aufgeregt, und der armen kleinen Mamsell wurde es nicht vergönnt, die Sonne nach Mahnerscher Manier auf sich wirken zu lassen. In unserm kalten Norden hatte man für paradiesische Trachten so wenig Verständnis, daß Mamsell Hansen seit der Zeit für ein wenig übergeschnappt galt. (GS, p. 85)

The implicit denial of the Mamsell's freewill is another censorious gesture: "Licht- und Luftbäder" requiring nudity was obviously a step too far for local sensibilities.

Additionally, exoneration of the youths' voyeristic excitement by attributing it solely to climactic specificity strikes a note of displacement that indicates the unquestioned perpetuation of prudery in the very unwillingness to admit it. Yet at the same time, it is clear that Mamsell Hansen displays no exhibitionist tendency, since she is dissuaded by the spectators. It will also be remembered that mere hearsay about the secretary's indiscretion causes her abrupt departure from Burg – her nudist inclinations are not extended to a questioning of her sexual morals. The fact that the "bösertige Jugend des Städtchens" acts on its fascination by being "noch früher auf den Beinen" (GS, p. 85), and the "Stadtoberhaupt's" vocal protest rather demonstrate that controls were being imposed with limited and specific, rather than wholesale effects: the Mamsell is made to feel uncomfortable about being naked outdoors, but outright ostracism does not ensue – she becomes a somewhat incomprehensible *other* who is only "ein wenig übergeschnappt" and remains an integral part of the community in spite of what are termed her unpragmatic peculiarities. Ultimately, she is robust in her old age and expounds on the virtues of "Naturheilkunde" with undiminished enthusiasm (cf. GS, p. 93).

The resonance of this narrative with contemporaneous political upheavals provides a final thematic point of note. An implicitly integrative standpoint becomes apparent in

respect of the diverse thematic material taken up in “Großvaters Schreiber”, as has been seen. A potential fracture appears when Rasmus loses self control after Mamsell Hansen’s departure:

Weshalb sagte Großvater, Rasmus solle machen, daß er fortkäme, als wir gerade alle bei Tische saßen, und der Schreiber mit seligem Gesicht hereinkam? Die Größeren hatten es bald heraus – es war der Schnaps aus Lütjenburg, der Rasmus so gleichgiltig, so blaurot, so sonderbar machte – und allmählich begannen wir den großen, starken Mann, der sich von einem kleinen Glase beherrschen ließ, zu verachten. (GS, p. 90)

His alcoholism results “zweimal” in the secretary’s dismissal, yet “der Schreiber ging [...] nicht, sondern blieb hartnäckig an seinem Posten” (GS, p. 90), to provide a forcible portrayal of a kind of underlying relatedness that still prevents his ultimate rejection and psychological dislocation even where rupture, and even contempt ensue. Notably, this relatedness is not associated with nationality: Rasmus is Danish, a circumstance that does not figure overtly in this memoir until peripheral reference is made to the Prussian conquest, which proceeds concurrently with the related events. This time, the conquest is focalised exclusively through the familial environment. It is

ein Ereignis, daß unsern Rasmus sehr ärgerte, weil er sich plötzlich seiner dänischen Geburt entsann. Er verhielt sich in Gesellschaft der unser Haus besuchenden preußischen Offiziere meistens sehr still und drückte sich in den dunkelsten Ecken herum. Sah er uns Kinder aber allein, dann stieß er allerhand geheimnisvolle Drohungen gegen die ‘frechen Kerls’ aus und behauptete, sie sollten ihn noch alle kennen lernen. [...] Getan aber hat er den Preußen niemals etwas, und diese waren schließlich Urheber seines Glückes; denn trotz seiner dänischen Geburt und seiner Vorliebe für den Lütjenburger Schnaps ist Rasmus Rasmussen als wohlbestallter preußischer Amtsgerichtssekretär gestorben. (GS, pp. 92-3)

Significantly, it is “unser” Rasmus who had forgotten his national origin – the overt political viewpoint is here implicitly undermined. The overall gist (rather than conclusion) of “Allerhand Politisches” is reasserted at this structurally apparently inconspicuous juncture. The narrative’s unconvincingly claimed “große Nachsicht” towards the “Dänischgesinnten des Landes” (AP, p. 233) upon gaining the upper hand is substantiated by the fact that Rasmus ultimately remains in post notwithstanding change of government and his alcoholism. As Prussian public official, his economic status improves: he is “wohlbestallt” with salary and benefits. Narratorial allegiance with

German-ness is here presented in deceptive form: Rasmus's life trajectory ends in his early death on account of his excessive partiality for the Lütjenburger (cf. GS, p. 93), which is narrated by his widow, who attributes his good-fortune not to Prussian officials but to the "Justizrat" Niese: "wenn er nicht immer mit Rasmus Geduld gehabt hätte, dann wäre der ja nicht Sekretär geworden, wo ich nun die schöne Pangscho von kriege" (GS, p. 93). Rather than, as in "Allerhand Politisches", resorting to the inherently divisive sentiment of triumph, a note of satisfaction that a simple human transaction had managed to outweigh political machinations and prerogatives emphasises simple familial pride. These events, as "moments of being" behind the "cotton wool of daily life", are selected as "token of some real thing".<sup>87</sup> The integrative stance offered time and again can be seen as a specific "Lösung von Innen her" in response to Niese's experience of the "Verwicklungen des Lebens,"<sup>88</sup> – it is not a coincidence that they occurred in the context of a period in German and European history that was increasingly and disastrously divisive.

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<sup>87</sup> Woolf, *Moments of Being*, p. 81.

<sup>88</sup> Jung, *Erinnerungen*, p. 12.

A further autobiographical sketch by Charlotte Niese appears in the “Digital Library of Works by German-speaking Women”.<sup>89</sup> This sketch, which deals with one of the author’s earliest memories and is specifically concerned with gender, provides further insights, both into Niese’s temperament and into the type of cultural environment that made up Fehmarn social life, and is included for this reason. The narrative begins with Charlotte’s removal from the parental to the grandparental home soon after her fifth birthday “weil wieder einmal ein Junge bei uns erschienen war, und Großmutter mich lieber für eine Zeitlang zu sich nehmen wollte” (MeS). This circumstance is not in itself remembered as traumatic – the Nieses operated as an extended family, with both homesteads being geographically close and equally accessible to the children. The negative memory instead is that

ich weiß nur, daß ich oft ermahnt wurde, nicht so wild zu sein, und daß mir immer wieder vorgestellt wurde, daß ich ein Mädchen und kein Junge wäre; eine Mahnung, die mich sehr ärgerte. (MeS)

The impact on the child of the concerted effort to feminise her can be taken from a situation related in *Aus dänischer Zeit*, when one of Charlotte’s brothers is asked how many children they were and answers, “acht Jungens; einer davon ist ein Mädchen!” (UkS, p. 4) – her acceptance and self-perception is premised on the absence of any essential difference between her and her siblings, a fact that readily becomes apparent in those sketches. The grandmother’s concern emerges as an emphatic motivation to counteract the predominating male role models, which she attributes to Charlotte’s lively and forthright personality; her impetus therefore is a restrictive one. In contrast to the flexible attitudinal stance that characterises *negotiation* as a primary psychological and social characteristic in the vignettes of *Aus dänischer Zeit*, this educative motivation proceeds implacably. The circumstance gains irony from the fact that it was

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<sup>89</sup> Cf. Charlotte Niese. “Meine erste Strickstunde”, in: *Als unsre großen Dichterinnen noch kleine Mädchen waren*. Online version: *Sophie. A Digital Library of Works by German-Speaking Women*. <<http://sophie.byu.edu/node/5968>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013. [Henceforth: MeS]

pliant feminine traits like “Passivität, Bescheidenheit, Fleiß, Güte, Anpassung, Emotionalität, Rezeptivität”<sup>90</sup> that were thus to be espoused. Further, the most unyielding, authoritarian figures here are women anxious to perpetuate self-censure and restriction of opportunity.

The narrative illustrates how gendered conditioning proceeded in Fehmarn society. Five-year-old Charlotte, preoccupied first with the depth of a puddle after heavy rain and thereafter with practising the art of whistling, which she admires her brothers for, is accosted by a “kleines Mädchen, [das] an meiner Haustür vorüberging”, who expresses contempt for her lack of femininity with a “Schimpfwort” while carrying “einen Teller mit zwei Salzheringen in der Hand”. In this peripheral figure, the process of gender norm internalisation is here shown to occur early on in childhood. When Charlotte, who “wußte von den Brüdern, daß man sich nie etwas gefallen lassen durfte”, retaliates by throwing the herrings into the puddle, the implacability of gendered education becomes apparent: her grandmother, the “gütigste Frau von der Welt [...] hielt es doch für ihre Pflicht, [Charlotte] einer Strafe zu unterwerfen, die man damals ‘ein Produkt’ nannte.” The punishment is “schmerzlich zu berichten” even with the hindsight of decades and is not related in full. Niese remembers being left feeling “ganz zerschmettert” and included the mortification of being forced to provide recompense out of her savings. The insult which had prompted Charlotte’s action, on the other hand, goes uncensored to amount to an inexplicable and brutal message about the imperative of ‘feminine’ behaviour.

The message was to be reinforced outside of the familial realm: a further consequence of the incident was Charlotte’s referral to “den ‘Tanten’”, ostensibly to learn how to knit. That the learning of this craft was to be accompanied by a stringent form of conditioning becomes quickly apparent in the admonitions of “Tante Grete”, an old

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<sup>90</sup> Ute Frevert, “Vom Klavier zur Schreibmaschine – Weiblicher Arbeitsmarkt und Rollenzuweisungen am Beispiel der weiblichen *Angestellten* in der Weimarer Republik”, in: Annette Kuhn/Gerhard Schneider (eds.) *Frauen in der Geschichte*. Düsseldorf: Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann, 1970, p. 82.



woman with a “Gesicht voll Falten und kleine[n] funkelnde[n] Augen”, who chided “fortwährend” while she “hielt einen Stock in der Hand”. The craft is aligned with pseudo-religious instruction:

“Ja, meine kleine Lotte, nun mußt du immer artig sein und für die Mutter und Vater Strumpfbänder stricken. Artige Kinder kommen in den Himmel, unartige in die Hölle oder in den Schweinestall!” (MeS)

Charlotte’s reaction to her barrage suggests a child whose non-authoritarian home environment had made her uncognisant of a complex moral-emotional equation that seamlessly forges lack of compliance together with ultimate punishment, and in turn with dirt and animals:

Ich hatte nur so im allgemeinen zugehört, jetzt aber horchte ich auf. “Wo ist der Schweinestall?” Aber ich erhielt keine Antwort. [...] Ein Kind, das schon stricken konnte, flüsterte mir auf meine Frage zu, das der Schweinestall, von dem Tante Grete gesprochen hatte, draußen im Garten läge. Er war unbewohnt; wer ganz unartig war, der mußte einige Stunden in ihm verbringen. Vorsichtig spähte ich aus dem Fenster. Richtig, mitten zwischen Büschen lag ein Gebäude, das mir sehr anziehend vorkam. Besser wäre es natürlich gewesen, man hätte sich die Zeit mit kleinen Schweinchen vertreiben können, die wirklich sehr niedlich sein konnten; aber ein leerer Schweinestall war doch wünschenswerter als dies ganze Zimmer voll von langweiligen Mädchen. Und wo war die Hölle, mit der Tante Grete drohte? Auf diese Frage fand meine Nachbarin nur einen verwunderten Blick. In die Hölle kam man natürlich, wenn man nicht ordentlich stricken lernte, aber erst, nachdem man tot war. (MeS)

The tacit awareness that the pig sty arouses curiosity rather than fear causes the gentler of the two ‘aunts’ to coerce Charlotte to perform the mechanics of knitting – “Tante Frederiecke nahm mich zwischen ihre Knie, und meine störrischen Finger mußten lernen: einstecken, überschlagen, durchholen, abstricken!” (MeS) – instead of engaging with her further. It is significant that the girls all whispered together during this episode, the only *modus operandi* available, to represent both subdued expression and an ambivalent training in underhanded exchanges. The style of narration is accomplished: the child’s perspective and retrospective adult interpretation are functionally unified into an unalloyed expression of childish affect, which remains acute, with wider contexts emerging indirectly. That physical violence against small girls is the implicit premise of the authoritarianism of “Tante Grete” should her verbal intimidations fail is clear from the repeated observation that she was carrying a cane during her

instructions and admonitions. Further, that the possibility of being placed in the pig sty is not meant to terrorise the children only with the humiliation of simple exclusion, but is attended by psychological ostracism through the implicit presence of taboo derived from the Christian censorship of dirt, instinct and body is readily apparent to the reader. The other child's processing of this education, that girls unable to knit were consigned to hell and that knitting therefore represented both morality and identity, hints darkly at the psychological mechanisms with which the childish spirit can be broken.

Charlotte, emotionally still allied with nature and unable to process the perverse subliminal messaging to which she appears as wholly unaccustomed, perceives the girls, as also a repeated coercive knitting instruction "langweilig", and the pig sty as of greater comparative interest even in its unoccupied state. Her attention turns inward to find sustenance in her internal preoccupations as she wonders, "was sollte ich eigentlich hier?" Kammerhof's assessment, that Niese "ist eine durchaus fröhliche Natur, weswegen die Tragik bei ihr sich um so mehr abhebt",<sup>91</sup> comes subsequently to be fully realised in this sketch. Charlotte's preoccupation with equalling her brothers in mastering the art of whistling "mit der Zunge gegen die Zähne" to sound like "das Summen einer großen Fliege, wie das Zirpen der Heuschrecke, wie das Piepen der Mäuse" continues to occupy her notwithstanding her grandmother's and the 'aunts' interventions. The sense of humour, as well as its import, are best conveyed by introducing the episode that forms the narrative climax at some length:

Leise pfiß ich vor mich hin; konnte ich meine Kunst noch so schön wie gestern, wo ich so darin gestört worden war? Ach, es ging noch, Gott sei Dank, aber ich mußte mich üben. Ein kleines Mädchen hob den Finger in die Höhe. "Tante Grete, darf ich mal was sagen?" "Gewiß, mein Kind!" "Tante Grete, ich glaub, es fliegt hier ein großer Brummer herum!" Alle Schülerinnen ließen die Arbeit sinken, und beide Tanten horchten angestrengt. Dann hob Tante Grete den Stock und schüttelte die Locken. "Im Augenblick kann ich nichts hören. Doch jetzt was ist das?" Sie sah nach der Zimmerdecke, und eins der Mädchen rief: "Ich sehe den großen Brummer! Nein, es ist eine Hornis!" "Eine Hornis!" Eine andre begann zu wimmern. "Tante Grete, die Hornissen beißen! Die können einen Menschen totstechen! Mein Onkel hat mal gesagt..." "Mußt nicht gleich so bange sein!" unterbrach Tante Grete. [...] Die Mädchen sprangen von den Stühlen, rafften ihre Röcke zusammen, und jede bemühte sich, so laut wie möglich zu schreien. Tante Fredericke aber

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<sup>91</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", p. 67.

stand auf dem Sofa und schien nicht übel Lust zu haben, an der Wand hinaufzuklettern. Das war sehr belustigend; ich ließ das Pfeifen und brach in ein schallendes Gelächter aus.

This scene, which manages simultaneously to be comical, incongruous and poignant, overtly makes a connection between suppression and over-reaction; the effort on the part of the girls to scream as loudly as possible implicitly accuses them of a hysterical inclination, which, moreover, is attributed to environmental causes.<sup>92</sup> The contrast of Charlotte's innocent experience of the situation on its own merits provides both comedic value and social commentary. Additionally, over-reaction is not limited to a momentary hysterical turn, but turns out to have a more sinister potential, since it can also manifest threateningly in a sustained and directed manner:

Einen Augenblick war alles still, dann griff Tante Grete zum Stock und schritt auf mich zu, während Tante Fredericke auf dem Sofa kauerte und ängstlich um sich sah. "Lotte, worüber lachst du?" "Weil – weil", weiter kam ich nicht. "Sie hat es getan!" meldete eine angeberische Stimme. "Du hast uns alle in Angst und Schrecken versetzt?" die kleine Gestalt Tante Gretes wuchs ins Riesenhafte. "Womit hast du diesen Lärm gemacht?" Ich konnte nicht antworten. Schweigend streckte ich die Zunge soweit wie möglich aus. Ein Gemurmel des Entsetzens erhob sich. "Sie hat die Zunge ausgestreckt!" "Damit habe ich doch gepfeifen!" wollte ich sagen, aber mir mangelte die Kraft. Zu viele Augen betrachteten mich erbarmungslos, und Tante Grete band mit einer so unheil drohenden Miene an ihren losgegangenen Locken, daß ich mich in den kleinen Schweinestall wünschte. Aber dann saß ich plötzlich mit meinem Stühlchen in der Zimmerecke, und zwar derartig, daß ich der Welt den Rücken drehte. (MeS)

Teacher and pupils collude in a common consensus that exaggerates the acoustic scope of the whistling, while managing to endow it with malice. This collective pressure, which begins to be overwhelming, ends with a punishment designed to humiliate. Yet Charlotte again summons her inner resources; while "Tante Fredericke", aided by the other girls who are now perceived as "abscheulich", hunts for a slipper lost

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<sup>92</sup> Niese is likely to have had an awareness of the late nineteenth-century medical discourse on female hysteria, since it was ubiquitous including in Germany, having moved from specialist journals to "popular journals that would find their readership in middle-class households" in connection with the "bitter debate which surrounded the development of improved opportunities for middle-class girls in secondary and higher education from the 1870s". (Anne Digby. "Women's Biological Straitjacket", in: Susan Mendus/Jane Rendall (eds.) *Sexuality & Subordination*. London/New York: Routledge, 1989, p. 208.) Anne Digby summarises its outline: "the constructs of eighteenth-century anatomists and nineteenth-century craniotomists appeared to show that fundamental gender differences were due not to nurture but to nature, and that women were permanently below men in the hierarchy of species." (Digby, "Women's Biological Straitjacket", p. 214.) Although this assumption was the predominant one, Morris Donohoe highlights that the French neurologist Jean Charcot's observations from 1878 in relation to "case histories of male hysterics" implied "that environmental and sociological conditions contributed to the development of hysteria". (Jane G. Morris/Morris Donohoe. "The History of Hysteria", in: *The Pharos*. Vol. 67, No. 2 (Spring 2004), pp. 40-43. The episode related appears to reflect an intuitive awareness of a tenacious divergence of public opinion.

during her “Sprung aufs Sofa”, the five-year-old finds and conceals this for a chance of gaining an ally by being the one who ultimately returns it:

Aber die andern konnten gern noch suchen; ich sah derweil in dem Spiegel, und dann streckte ich mir selbst die Zunge aus. “Sie streckt schon wieder die Zunge aus!” meldete die gleiche Stimme, die mich schon einmal angegeben hatte. Mit einem Satz sprang ich von meinem Strafplatz, griff nach dem Pantoffel, und schlug mit ihm auf die Besitzerin dieser Stimme ein. Was dann geschah, weiß ich nicht mehr ganz genau. Ich glaube, Tante Grete hatte mich ergriffen, und der Stock sollte angewendet werden. Aber da klopfte es an die Tür, und eine freundliche Stimme fragte: “Darf ich hineinkommen? Ich wollte meine kleine Tochter abholen!” Es war die Stimme meines Vaters! [...] Aufweinend stürzte ich auf ihn zu und griff nach seiner Hand, während Tante Grete ein ziemlich verdutztes Gesicht machte.

Aunt Gretel’s heavy-handed attitude in tandem with the psychological mechanisms employed here cause approval-seeking by denunciation, reminiscent of the cowed attitude portrayed to sinister effect in Heinrich Mann’s novel *Der Untertan*,<sup>93</sup> which presents a narrator in whom “bereits in den frühen Kinderjahren [...] die Tendenz erkennbar [wird], sich mit der jeweiligen Unterdrückungsmacht zu identifizieren” and in whom “kein Aufbegehren zu beobachten [ist], sondern [...] freudig-beflissene Unterwerfung”.<sup>94</sup> In “Meine erste Strickstunde”, however, the focalised viewpoint is not the psyche compromised by the system, but the child’s instinctive fury, vented at the behaviour as it manifests against her. That Niese’s memory becomes unclear at this point is suggestive of the beginnings of trauma, where this is defined as an emotional situation that is too overwhelming to be consciously processed, hinted at also in the emotive memory that “dunkel war die Welt geworden, ganz dunkel.”

Charlotte’s father restores her calm when she observes on the way home “daß er leise vor sich hinlächelte”, at which point she manages to relate the episode to him as she had experienced it. His reply consists mainly in the question, “willst du wirklich so dumm bleiben, daß du nicht einmal stricken lernen kannst?” The mildly uttered admonition has the conditioning effect that both her grandmother’s and the ‘aunts’ brutal approaches failed to have: it causes Charlotte to acquiesce to receiving further

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<sup>93</sup> Cf. Heinrich Mann. *Der Untertan*. Leipzig: K. Wolff, 1918.

<sup>94</sup> Unpublished lecture given by Dr Gesa von Essen [Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, 2008], transcript kindly provided by Gesa von Essen.

knitting lessons. Her father here expresses what the sociologist Jane Mercer has termed a “social model in which ‘normal’ refers to behaviour which adequately fulfils a given role”.<sup>95</sup> The ostensible mildness of his response, however, belies one of the “social psychological pathways through which handicap might be generated, imposed on – and indeed internalized and hence self-generated by – the handicapped person”.<sup>96</sup> In this case the domesticity taken to define femininity is taken as the normative standard. It is significant that “Meine erste Strickstunde” concludes largely, though not only, on a harmonising note: Niese does not confront the import of her father’s words, which she interprets in retrospect as a neutral viewpoint that communicated only that it was necessary “sich mit Lernen zu plagen”. She goes on to focus on the loss of the “geliebte, geduldige Stimme” which had rescued her from the condemnation of the ‘aunts’, while also consigning her to their further ministrations. Yet psychological complexity is not entirely relinquished:

Zu den Tanten bin ich [...] am nächsten Morgen wieder gewandert, und ich habe gelernt, Strumpfbänder zu stricken. Krawall hat’s noch öfter gegeben, ich weiß, daß mir verschiedene Sünden später vorgehalten wurden. Ich habe sie vergessen: aber meine erste Strickstunde habe ich nie vergessen. (MeS)

Although to Charlotte, the ability to knit “Strumpfbänder” had been communicated as a measure both of ability and normality, she also appears to have returned to these knitting lessons with a greater degree of psychological resilience. The implication here is that her father’s good-humoured attitude had acted as an emotional shield against the condemnatory stance of her tutors: Niese’s dismissal of further acrimonious situations as “Krawall” belittles their import similarly to the way she had witnessed her father’s stance, when she, aged five, saw “daß er leise vor sich hinlächelte” (MeS). “Krawall”, a semi-humorous term that emphasises effect rather than substance, implicitly attributes responsibility for further acrimony to the ‘aunts’, rather than to her own “Sünden”. Her concluding statement, never to have forgotten that first knitting

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<sup>95</sup> Mercer, quoted in: Lindsay St Claire. “When is Gender a Handicap? Towards Conceptualizing the Socially Constructed Disadvantages experienced by Women”, in: Suzanne Skevington/Deborah Baker (eds). *The Social Identity of Women*. London/California et.al.: Sage Publications, 1989, p. 131.

<sup>96</sup> St Claire, “When is Gender a Handicap?”, pp. 130-1.

lesson finally does not fit with the harmonising ending of this narrative; it refers the reader back to the events she had been forced to accommodate. The very narration of the situation is an instance of creating wholeness “by putting it into words”, so that “it has lost its power to hurt me”;<sup>97</sup> it here occurs in a positive sense, since a voice emerges which witnesses events notwithstanding their conditioning consequences.

The previously identified inclination to effect compromise rather than opposition, termed by Niese herself as “wer hier auf Erden froh sein will, der muß es mit der Alltäglichkeit halten”<sup>98</sup> encompasses and accommodates antithetical psychological, as well as social ingredients. This trait is strongly to the fore in “Meine erste Strickstunde” and will also be found to constitute an important part of her fictional style. The harmful psychological potential of the ‘aunts’ may make compromise questionable in respect of the narrated situation, since they perpetuate a rigid, authoritarian context that dichotomises and hierarchises gender. The sketches of *Aus dänischer Zeit*, however, which narrate slightly older childhood years, do not bear witness to a broken feminised spirit that measures its success in compliance. Charlotte’s continued resilience was no doubt facilitated by her grandmother’s early death (cf. AP, p. 222). Her own mother, in turn, is referred to as kindly, while appearing to have been rather passive – she appears only occasionally in the “Skizzen”, such as with smiling but ineffectual admonitions to be “recht artig”,<sup>99</sup> or to look after belongings<sup>100</sup> – male role models, according to these vignettes, continue to predominate. Niese’s memoirs overall relate the kind of robust confidence, independence and, usually, emotional intelligence that make up a sustainable psychic life, rather than one predisposed to trauma and unrealistic self-conceptions. The occasional failures of feeling and moments of unthinking cruelty, which recur notably though not only when dealing with animals,<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Woolf, *Moments of Being*, p. 81.

<sup>98</sup> Niese, “Der Stadtmusikus”, in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, p. 74.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Charlotte Niese. “Die Reise ins Kloster”, in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, p. 321.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Charlotte Niese. “Großvaters Schreiber”, in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, p. 83.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. also, Niese, “Die Reise ins Kloster”, in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, pp. 317-41, esp. pp. 325-7, 329, 333-34, 337.

relate a childhood that consistently includes “a little wickedness”.<sup>102</sup> Despite an intrinsically religious familial background – Niese’s father was the local pastor – her memories do not configure piety as an ontological goal. Arguably, the psychological shadow is not wholly censored from her memoirs, and they are therefore interpretable in terms of the “principle of growth toward wholeness [...] that necessarily involves a creative relationship between the dark instinctive side of man’s nature and the light of consciousness.”<sup>103</sup> The sense of integration which attends Fehmarn social life, seen in the narrative treatment of characters such as “de Olsch” among others,<sup>104</sup> as also some of Charlotte’s own behaviours, echo Erich Neumann’s paradoxical observation, that “the acknowledgement of one’s evil is ‘good’. To be good – that is, to want to transcend the limits of the good which is actually available and possible – is evil”.<sup>105</sup> While the “Tanten” of the knitting lesson represent such a polarising process notably in respect of gender conditioning, the familial and social interactions which are depicted as a mainstay of Charlotte’s formative experiences rather tend to incorporate than to posit or recommend a “split between light and darkness in the psyche.”<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Avens, “The Image of the Devil in C.G. Jung’s Psychology”, p. 201

<sup>103</sup> Avens, “The Image of the Devil in C.G. Jung’s Psychology”, p. 205.

<sup>104</sup> Another notable sketch which has a socially peripheral character who remains integrated and accepted particularly by the children is “Mahlmann”, in “Diebesrache”, a ‘ne’er do well’ who in his old age takes revenge on social conventions by pickling a deceased farmer who had conspired to his disadvantage while alive. (Cf. Niese, “Diebesrache”, in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*, pp. 47-62.) A further sketch relates the life of a man for whom repeated adverse circumstances prove overwhelming, and whose daughters appear as callous when they abandon him

<sup>105</sup> Erich Neumann. *Depth Psychology and a New Ethics*. New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1969, p. 114.

<sup>106</sup> Avens, “The Image of the Devil in C.G. Jung’s Psychology”, p. 203.

## Charlotte Niese and *Heimatliteratur*. Variations of a Genre

### Introduction

In order to begin to explore the scope of *Heimatliteratur* as a literary genre, I previously introduced a series of autobiographical sketches by Niese, who was regarded as a high-profile female exponent at that time. The choice of these texts in part reflects this study's focus on the contribution of bourgeois main-stream women to late nineteenth-century writing in Germany. Additionally, it introduces a less well-known form of *Heimatkunst* prose, that of life-writing. These narrative sketches had a predominantly middle-class readership, as is usually attributed to *Heimatkunst* narratives. They generally present a bourgeois narrative viewpoint and include bourgeois-specific content, such as references to domestic servants. One of them appeared in *Die Gartenlaube*, and several include an overt, albeit ambivalent, patriotic gist.

The following study will expand the generic investigation by re-examining demographic scope on the one hand, and by interrogating the boundaries of *Heimatliteratur* on the other. It will comprise consecutive readings of three texts: the novella *Gottes Wege*, and the novels *Das Lagerkind* and *Licht und Schatten*. These narratives present a variety of text-types on the one hand, while on the other, each simultaneously presents a form of generic hybridisation: *Gottes Wege* is an example of regional writing with an expanded demographic, as well as authorial remit. Textual and subtextual material are here partially at variance within a narrative scenario otherwise readily attributable to a traditional *Heimatkunst* remit. *Das Lagerkind* is a form of bridging fiction for adolescent and adult readers, which stretches generic boundaries to a greater extent and incorporates significant social critique through two distinct, notable subtextual agendas.



The novel *Licht und Schatten* does not aim for an extended demographic – it addresses the “städtische Kleinbürgertum”<sup>1</sup> – but generic boundaries are here stretched to the extent that an innovative form of regional writing results, which defies even loosely conceived assumptions about *Heimatliteratur*. The narratives will be presented according to the extent to which they compromise generally acknowledged generic parameters, rather than chronologically.

### *The Antagonistic Relationship Between Religion and Psychological Realism in Gottes Wege*

*Gottes Wege*<sup>2</sup> ran to three editions, respectively published in 1904, 1905 and 1917. The publisher's details reveal its status: the moral and religious preoccupations iterated over the course of the narrative are not issued as an emotive or even sentimental outpouring.<sup>3</sup> Rather, they were approved by a theologically specific publisher as being of an instructional nature, offered in an accessible form. Its religious themes were perceived as being helpful to the social conundrums of the period. The timing of the third edition bears out this observation: the long gap between this and the novella's second publication suggests that it was not re-issued due to a high demand on the second print run, but rather, that its spiritual and moral message was deemed particularly pertinent to the time of republication. Due to its optimistic and didactic gist, *Gottes Wege* can be described as an “Erbauungsschrift”<sup>4</sup> that aims at the “Kräftigung

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rosemarie Zeller. “Heimatkunst”, in: *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz*. Online version: <<http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/d/D11213.php>>. Accessed 18 June 2014..

<sup>2</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Gottes Wege. Erzählung für das Volk*. Hamburg: Verlag der Evangelischen Buchhandlung, 1904. (Henceforth: GW)

<sup>3</sup> The relationship of this narrative with religious creed is apprehendable also from the publisher's concurrent titles, which are advertised at the back of the volume. In addition to comparable fictional texts, critical essays on the old and new testament of the Bible, sermons and catechisms are included (cf. GW, pp. 92-6).

<sup>4</sup> The term “Erbauungsschrift” has ambiguous linguistic, and hence also critical, status. According to Rosemarie Zeller, “Heimatliteratur gehört zur Volksliteratur, die sich mit populären Lesestoffen (z.B. Heftchenromane, Erbauungsschriften) und traditionellen, alltäglichen Erzählungen (z.B. Märchen) beschäftigt.” (Rosemarie Zeller. “Heimatliteratur”, <<http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/d/D11213.php>>.) Since “Erbauungsschrift” refers generally to an affirmative overall message, this does not necessarily

der idealistischen Triebe aller Menschen”,<sup>5</sup> and due to its strongly regional and rural focus is categorisable as one of the now little-known sub-forms of *Wilhelmine* “Heimatliteratur”. It is the most overtly religious of Niese’s texts that I have come across and calls to mind that her robust and free childhood was lived in the context of an overtly spiritual familial environment – as previously observed, she had been born into a pastor’s family.

*Gottes Wege* is included partly to demonstrate the variety of Niese’s work within the boundaries of *Heimatkunst* in order to explore the movement’s heterogeneity and to contribute to differentiated socio-historic observations. A specific interest is to examine the tension between conceptual openness and certitudes in this novella. Narrative, or story, is in the context of this study viewed as reflecting both conscious *and* unconscious aspects of human consciousness.<sup>6</sup> It may refer to, but is not dependent

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denote lack of value on account of socio-politically manipulative intent, vacuous thematic content, or undue narratorial optimism. The term is here taken as tendential inasmuch as “Erbauung” requires affirmation rather than derogation overall, which in turn necessitates an open avowal of specific values.

<sup>5</sup> Otto Heller. “Die deutsche Schriftstellerin von gestern und heute”, in: *Pädagogische Monatshefte*, Vol. 4, No. 8/9 (1903), p. 257.

<sup>6</sup> The idea that narrative is not purely contingent on socio-political circumstances, and that narrative composition can potentially have a deeper referentiality than conscious or even *subconscious* experience is borne out by Marie-Louise von Franz, who comments on the oldest known stories: “Fairy tales have also been found in Egyptian *papyri* and *stelai*, one of the most famous being that of the two brothers Anup (Anubis) and Bata. It runs absolutely parallel to the two brother-type tales, which one can still collect in all European countries. We have written tradition for three thousand years, and what is striking is that *the basic motifs have not changed much*. Furthermore, according to Father Max Schmidt’s theory, *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee*, we have information to the effect that certain themes of tales go as far back as twenty-five thousand years before Christ, practically unaltered” [*sic.*]. (Max Schmidt, quoted in: Marie-Louise von Franz. *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*. London/Boston: Shambhala, 1996, pp. 3-4.) The potential stature of narrative is also described by Julian David, who distinguishes authored from non-authored content: “Fairy tales are in a different category to novels or plays or short stories, because no-one writes them. They come out of an objective tradition, grown out of the ground like mushrooms – and with something of the nature of the hallucinogenic mushroom, for they initiate into another reality.” (Julian David. *Interweaving Symbols of Individuation*. Cape Town: Kaggen Press, 1991, p. 11.) Christopher Booker notes: “The real significance of our capacity to imagine stories [...] lies in the extent to which they emerge from some part of the mind which is beyond the storyteller’s conscious awareness. To a great degree stories are [...] the product of a controlling power which is centred in the unconscious. The very fact that they follow such identifiable patterns and are shaped by such consistent rules indicates that the unconscious is thus using them for a purpose.” (Christopher Booker. *The Seven Basic Plots. Why we tell stories*. London: Continuum, 2006, p. 553.) In an essay entitled “Psychology and Literature”, Jung distinguishes two types of narratives, the “psychological” and the “visionary”. He expounds the former: “The psychological mode deals with materials drawn from the realm of human consciousness – for instance, with the lessons of life, with emotional shocks, the experience of passion and the crises of human destiny in general [...]. This material is psychically assimilated by the poet, raised from the commonplace to the level of poetic experience, and given an expression which forces the reader to greater clarity and depth of human insight by bringing fully into his consciousness what he ordinarily evades and overlooks or senses only with a feeling of dull discomfort. [...] I have called this mode of artistic creation psychological because in its activity it nowhere transcends the bounds of psychological intelligibility.” On the other hand, “the profound difference between the first and second parts of *Faust* marks the difference between the psychological and the visionary modes of artistic creation. The latter reverses all the

on, socio-political circumstances. Such an understanding of prose fiction implies that a paradoxical congruence between recognisable structural patternings on the one hand, and an inherent tendency towards open-ended meanings on the other, exists as a characteristic of narrative. That this characteristic derives not least from the capacities and limitations of linguistic formulation may be additionally acknowledged. Conversely, dogma, defineable as tenets authoritatively posited by, for instance, a religious institution, is conducive to the constellation of black-and-white values, which are mutually exclusive. In terms of a reading of *Gottes Wege*, fusions and fractures between narrative and dogma are of particular interest and will form the basis for commentary on narrative stature.

The novella's setting is the rural, agricultural area around a Northern German village referred to as Wellhausen. Chief protagonists include the positively-connoted Andreas Ellern, a young smallholder, and the Harding family, whose "Besitz war der stattlichste in der ganzen Gegend" (GW, p. 15). This family comprises Andreas's betrothed, the pious Elsbeth, her sickly mother, and her proud father Marten, who objects to Andreas on account of the latter's lack of wealth but who, persuaded by his wife, reluctantly acquiesces to the match. This thematisation of the "übertriebenes materielles Denken"<sup>7</sup> of wealthy farmers early presents social critique of rural settings that is based in personal experience: according to Karl-Wilhelm Klahn, it was "Bauern-Hochmut" which in actuality "trieb [Niese] 'von Fehmarn'".<sup>8</sup> The narrative complication is the murder of "Inspektor Müller", who is found shot dead "in einem kleinen Buchenholz, einem Ausläufer des großen Wellhofer Gartens" (GW, p. 11). Strange circumstances attend the case:

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conditions of the former. The experience that furnishes the material for artistic expression is no longer familiar. It is a strange something that derives its existence from the hinterland of man's mind – that suggests the abyss of time separating us from pre-human ages [...]. It is a primordial experience which surpasses man's understanding, and to which he is therefore in danger of succumbing." (Carl Gustav Jung. *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. London: Routledge, 1990, pp. 179-80.)

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Karl-Wilhelm Klahn. "Charlotte Niese. Fehmarns größte Schriftstellerin", in: *Reisecenter Fehmarn. Personen von Fehmarn*. <[http://www.reisecenter-fehmarn.de/fehmarinselgeschichte\\_Charlotte+Niese+++Fehmarns+groesste+Schriftstellerin\\_239\\_2.html](http://www.reisecenter-fehmarn.de/fehmarinselgeschichte_Charlotte+Niese+++Fehmarns+groesste+Schriftstellerin_239_2.html)>. Accessed 31 March 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Klahn, "Charlotte Niese", <[http://www.reisecenter-fehmarn.de/fehmarinselgeschichte\\_Charlotte+Niese+++Fehmarns+groesste+Schriftstellerin\\_239\\_2.html](http://www.reisecenter-fehmarn.de/fehmarinselgeschichte_Charlotte+Niese+++Fehmarns+groesste+Schriftstellerin_239_2.html)>.

Als man die Kleider des Ermordeten durchsuchte, fand man, daß weder seine kostbare Uhr noch Kette fehlten; auch sein Geldbeutel steckte unberührt und gefüllt in der Tasche, und so konnte man nicht annehmen, daß ein Raubmord vorläge. Das Gewehr, welches der Inspektor über der Schulter getragen, als er das Haus verlassen, war verschwunden und nirgends zu finden. (GW, p. 12)

The story thereafter deals with the indictment of the innocent Andreas, chiefly because a “Dolchmesser”, found in the hand of the inspector, is refuted to have belonged to the dead man by a young gooseherd in his service, who had “oft mit den Sachen des Inspektors gespielt” (GW, p. 12) and the item is subsequently discovered to belong to Ellern. The narrative trajectory involves the social phenomenon of character assassination through gossip and the slow uncovering of the truth about the case, the roots of which are eventually revealed as reaching far into the past.

Prior to the establishment of the knife’s ownership, the malicious and degraded old woman “Mutter Liese” begins to machinate against Ellern in a half-serious gesture of revenge because he had not allowed her to keep a ham she had attempted to steal from his farm. A conversation with one of the “Knechte” of an outlying farmstead, which she visits to beg for food, emphasises an emotional mechanism of their slander:

Liese blinzelte ihn lustig an. Andreas Ellern hatte sie gekränkt, weshalb sollte sie ihn nicht auch ärgern? “Frag’ nicht zu viel, Hinnerk; du könntest dir den Mund verbrennen!” rief sie höhnisch. “Elsbeth Harding ist fromm, sie liest alle Abende in der Bibel, und das muß sie wohl nötig haben, sonst würde sie es nicht tun; aber Andreas läßt das bleiben, obgleich er das auch brauchen könnte.” “Nun, dir könnte die Bibel auch nicht schaden!” lachte Hinnerk, aber Liese drohte ihm zornig. “Was geht mich die Bibel an? Die ist nur für Leute, die lesen können. Wenn der liebe Gott für mich die Bibel geschrieben hätte, dann hätte er mir das Lesen zeigen können. Und ich bin doch noch tausendmal besser als Andreas Ellern, denn ich schieße keinen Menschen tot!” (GW, p. 10)

Mutual provocation and indirect allusion here drive the exchange. The import of the conversation largely unfolds sub-cognitively: nothing of any conceptual significance is exchanged, instead, the fear of a transcendent divine authority is played on in an emotionally shrewd altercation that consists of vying for dominance on Liese’s part, and temporary resistance to her machination by Hinnerk. The psychological dynamic of her moral judgement entails her own exemption from the demands and accusations she levels. Further, mystification is necessary for success: it is by hinting at superior,

undisclosed knowledge that Liese, when challenged, finally establishes the pseudo-authority of her aggressively self-affirmative assertion, which simultaneously serves as a thinly veiled accusation. The rumours that effect the character assassination of Andreas grow organically from the emotionally manipulative and astute, but intellectually arbitrary basis established by Mutter Liese:

Keiner wußte recht, wie es zuginge; aber plötzlich ward der Name von Andreas Ellern leise, ganz leise mit dem Morde in Verbindung gesetzt, und nach zwei Tagen sprachen die Kinder auf der Straße davon. (GW, p. 13)

When “einige behaupteten, daß der Bauer Marten Harding das Gerücht zuerst ausgesprengt hat”, the “Wellhausener Gendarm” becomes complicit in the local hearsay by writing “einen langen Bericht über Andreas Ellern an seine Behörde” (GW, p. 13) on account of this farmer’s solid standing, a circumstance that proves sufficient for Ellern’s imprisonment as chief suspect. Prejudice therefore attends both the local peasants and to the judicial institution, which is staffed by a gullible individual: neither the simple rural inhabitants, nor the policeman’s officialdom are equal to the psychological machinations of an old, malicious woman, who proves subtler than the cognition of both.

The interpretative turn of this episode is reminiscent of that which occurs in “Allerhand Politisches” in respect of the political situation in Schleswig at the end of King Frederik’s reign (AP, p. 219): abstract notions that generally attend the concept of state authority are foregone and power is instead depicted as being in fallible hands. Institutional authority is therefore implicitly undermined. Yet Niese’s integrative narrative style here becomes apparent, to soften the critique: when “Oberpolizist Heinicke” (GW, p. 17) comes to Wellhausen from the city to arrest the suspect, he is on the one hand portrayed as professionally deceitful: he disingenuously reassures Andreas, who looks “als wenn der Blitz vor ihm eingeschlagen hätte” (GW, p. 18), since he “hatte schon manchen Menschen verhaftet und war immer bemüht ihnen Mut einzusprechen, damit sie sich leicht von ihm fortbringen ließen” (GW, p. 17). At the

same time, however, he is professionally sceptical and less prejudiced than the average local, and hence “trotz seines schwierigen Amtes keine unbeliebte Persönlichkeit” (GW, p. 17). An example of a style of moderate criticism therefore appears which, arguably, contributes to the gradual attrition of collective preconceptions, rather than attempting to combat them confrontationally. An important subsidiary effect of this mitigative narratorial style is that moral responsibility is referred back to the individual, rather than institutional or political sphere. Mutter Liese is fully cognisant of her ability to destabilise the local social order:

Wenn mir der dumme Andreas Ellern seinen Schinken gelassen hätte, dann wär's noch besser. Aber der Kerl war vernagelt, und nun sitzt er dafür im Loch!“ Sie kicherte tückisch vor sich hin. “Ja, ja, die alte Liese kann mehr als Brot essen! Ich lasse mir gar nichts gefallen!” (GW, pp. 37-8)

The episode extends insights into behaviours of indigenous rural inhabitants that are far from laudatory. Its thematic constellation is worth considering in the light of generalising characterisations of *Heimatliteratur* that have tended to represent the entire genre as a repository for “anti-urban and anti-modern diatribes”.<sup>9</sup> According to such assessments, rural protagonists are constructed to be “idealtypisch”, being intended to function as exemplary “organische[], nicht-zivilisationsgeschädigte[] Menschen”, while the “konstruierte Welt [...] nach simplen Antinomien [funktioniert]”. The authorial motivation for this constellation, accordingly, is the provision of “Wunschbilder aus vergangenen Zeiten als Modell für sozial- bzw. kulturhygienische Maßnahmen”.<sup>10</sup> In *Gottes Wege*, however, neither the depiction of “Bauernhochmut”

<sup>9</sup> Jennifer Jenkins. “Heimat Art, Modernism, Modernity”, in: David Blackbourn/James Retallack (eds.) *Localism, Landscape, and the Ambiguities of Place. German-Speaking Central Europe, 1860-1930*. Toronto/London: University of Toronto Press, 2007, p. 60.

<sup>10</sup> Kay Dohnke. “Heimatliteratur und Heimatkunstbewegung”, in: Diethart Kerbs/Jürgen Reulecke (eds.) *Handbuch der deutschen Reformbewegungen 1880-1933*. Wuppertal: Hammer, 1998, pp. 483, 487. – The generalisation in this case itself has a notable political bias. Dohnke feels that “aus der historischen Distanz läßt sich der Diskurs der Heimatkunstbewegung als System literarisch-künstlerischer und propagandisch-medialer Kompensationshandlungen charakterisieren. Anstatt politisch effektiv zu handeln, konzentrierten sich die Akteure auf ein Nach-Schaffen von idealtypischen, sinnhaften und geordneten Lebensläufen.” (Dohnke, “Heimatliteratur”, p. 483.) A left-political stance becomes apparent in the assumption that political action is the only effective kind of activism. Attributes posited as negative from such a standpoint, however, can become positive when a psychological perspective is applied. For instance, she takes “Streben nach verllorener Ganzheitlichkeit” (Dohnke, “Heimatliteratur”, p. 487) as an example of ideologised content. The implication is that fragmentation is a preferable alternative, because a more realistic one, whereas “Ganzheitlichkeit”, in depth-psychological terms, is connoted in terms of individuation. It is problematic that Dohnke generalises without references to specific texts, to support an

already referred to, nor of the machinations of a degraded character like “Mutter Liese” attest to the validity of such generalisations.

The circumstance of Ellern’s arrest is sufficient for the rumour to become generally accepted truth:

Der Krugwirt hatten einen guten Tag, denn jeder mußte dort doch einkehren und ein Glas Bier trinken, wo der Oberpolizist abgestiegen war, und jedermann wollte sich doch auch erzählen lassen, wie Andreas Ellern ausgesehen, als er wie ein Gefangener in die Stadt fuhr. (GW, p. 20)

Subtle narratorial critique of cause and effect here accompanies the main situational gist: Andreas is driven to town “wie ein Gefangener”, rather than as “Gefangener”, peripherally to underline his innocence and the injustice being perpetrated. The import of the locals’ uproar is thereby emphasised: the emotional weight of their fascination belies the self-righteousness with which they clamour to be associated both with the retributive power personified in the “Oberpolizist”, and with the sensation that Andreas has become for them: he has come to serve as *other*, or scapegoat, for the community. The significance of this episode is as stark as it is astute, since the behaviours described are not socio-historically specific, but remain highly recognisable. The exposition begun with the exchange between Liese and Knecht Hinnerk is developed further when farmers and artisans congregate at the local inn and judgement is pronounced by “Schneider Wohlers”, a character “welcher Andreas gar nicht kannte und sich ärgerte, daß er nicht bei ihm arbeiten ließ.” Wohlers’s claim that Ellern “konnte sich immer gut verstellen” (GW, p. 20) presents a further assertion that obliquely hints at privileged knowledge and insight to achieve authority and self-exoneration, to amplify the previously introduced psychological mechanics of gossip. A situation in which fallacy is clear to the reader, but not to the protagonists, is thereby created to aid the instructional gist of the narrative. Further rumours are invented when Wohlers and the village smith Ötker, joined by others, reciprocally engage in gestures

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interpretation of Wilhelmine society as a precursor to fascism, which, as has been discussed, is too simplistic.

of self-aggrandisement that again aim for pseudo-authority as the basis for indictment (cf. GW, pp. 20-1), to constellate prejudice in terms of incongruity. In terms of the portrayal of rural life, the narrative does not recommend local justice in an episode that demonstrates collective collusion in terms of fallacy as well as implicit savagery.

Prejudice, which espouses condemnation, is aligned with superstition when, after his sojourn at the Inn, Wohlers reacts fearfully to a meeting with the local shepherd, Eichborn, in the dark:

Er hatte den Kopf voll von Gedanken über alles, was er selbst gesprochen und was er gehört, und deshalb achtete er nicht auf seine Umgebung. Plötzlich fuhr er zurück, denn vor ihm auf einem großen Stein saß eine menschliche Gestalt. Der Schneider, welcher am Tage immer viel Mut besaß, sich aber im Dunkeln desto mehr fürchtete, blieb einen Augenblick stehen, weil er nicht wagte, an der Gestalt vorüberzugehen. (GW, p. 21)

Notably, the tailor's susceptibility is suggested to have increased after his rumour-mongering, to imply that his speculations and accusations occur at the expense of self-awareness. The confrontation between these characters serves to develop the narrative's psychological discourse:

"Weshalb sitzt du hier und erschrickst die Leute? Rechtschaffene Menschen bleiben zu Hause um diese Zeit!" Der Schäfer rührte sich nicht. "Rechtschaffene Leute gehen ins Wirtshaus, verlästern ihren Nächsten und vertrinken ihr mühsam verdientes Geld!" sagte er [...]. (GW, p. 22)

The tailor's susceptibility is more complex than is first apparent – the dark here has metaphoric, as well as literal meaning. Physically it represents the inability to see, while psychologically it signifies the unknown, unacknowledged and repressed qualities and phenomena that had just been constellated at the Inn. In other words, it represents the depth-psychological notion of shadow.<sup>11</sup> The function of the locals' gossip had been to

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<sup>11</sup> Maybe move this to the Introduction: A succinct explanation of the 'shadow' is provided by Marie-Louise von Franz: "The word *shadow* is simply a name we use for the fact that most people are not fully aware of all their personality traits. We like to imagine ourselves as being intelligent, or generous, or good-natured, or practically gifted, and what not. But we have other qualities in our complete personality, inferior qualities that we are not so aware of. Our relationship to our surroundings tells us about them, and in quarrels they come out. But we tend to push them into the shadow. We don't look at them, and when we think about ourselves we forget about these qualities, for they often make us ashamed. Only our best friends and people we live with can generally point out these more inferior traits very clearly." (Fraser Boa. *The Way of the Dream. Conversations on Jungian Dream Interpretation with Marie-Louise von Franz*. Boston/London: Shambhala, 1994, pp. 77-8.)



disown their own undesirable character traits by establishing a scapegoat that functions as symbol and focus for all those qualities attributable to the affective amalgam 'despicability'. That their action is driven by subconscious motivation is betrayed by the emotional intensity and eagerness with which their gossip proceeds. This repressive act, for the tailor, however, leads to a fear of the night in a narratorial gesture which subliminally acknowledges that repression leads not to the *defeat* of undesirable qualities, but rather, to their autonomy 'in the dark'. The shepherd, in turn, poses a dual threat, first appearing as an anonymous "Gestalt" of the dark, and thereafter, as the challenger who destabilises the whole gossip enterprise. Thus Wohlers attempts to remove the challenge by recruiting him:

"Ja, ja, Schäfer Eichborn," sagte er seufzend, "wir Menschen sind nun einmal alle Sünder! Aber du hättest auch nur in den Krug kommen sollen, denn Andreas Ellern ist doch ein greulicher Mensch! Du liebe Zeit, es gibt doch viel Schlechtigkeit auf der Welt!" (GW, p. 22)

Both the rejection of personal responsibility and invitation to the shepherd to join the common consensus fail as manoeuvres aimed at disowning personal "Schlechtigkeit" in a cutting portrayal of average morality. Avens observes that

the man without awareness of his shadow – statistically a very common occurrence – is the man who believes he is actually only what he knows about himself. He is in fact the mass man who acts as if mistakes are committed by 'state' or 'society'.<sup>12</sup>

Jung adds that the projection of shadow engenders not only self-exoneration but an undifferentiated way of being:

He regards himself as harmless, and so adds stupidity to iniquity. He does not deny that terrible things have happened and still go on happening, but it is always 'the others' who do them. And when such deeds belong to the recent or remote past, they quickly and conveniently sink into the sea of forgetfulness, and that state of chronic woolly-mindedness returns which we describe as 'normality'.<sup>13</sup>

Emphasis on personal responsibility, an emphatic thematic trait of *Gottes Wege*, ensues with the shepherd's impassive response:

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<sup>12</sup> Robert Avens. "The Image of the Devil in C.G. Jung's Psychology", in: *Journal of Religion and Health*. Vol 16, No. 3 (Jul. 1977), p. 201.

<sup>13</sup> Carl Gustav Jung. *The Undiscovered Self*. New York: New American Library, 1957, p. 108.

Der alte Schäfer stieß große Rauchwolken von sich, und der Tabak in seiner kleinen Pfeife leuchtete dann und wann auf wie ein großes glühendes Auge. "Ja," wiederholte er, bedächtig sprechend; "es gibt viel Schlechtigkeit auf der Welt. Ein Mensch schlägt einen andern tot, das ist eine große Sünde; aber Gott ist gerecht, der Mörder wird schon seine Strafe bekommen. Ihr aber, ihr Leute vom Wirtshause, seid nicht besser als der Mörder! Im vorigen Jahr hatte ich ein kleines Lamm verloren, und als ich's wiederfand, da war es tot, und die Raben saßen auf dem armen Ding und pickten das Fleisch von den Knochen. So pickt ihr an Andreas Ellern herum und zerhackt seinen guten Ruf mit euren Schnäbeln, und keiner von euch weiß doch, ob er ein Mörder ist. (GW, pp. 22-3)

The first direct superimposition of Protestant doctrine is here apparent along with the psychological insight which Eichborn offers. It is debatable whether the simplicity of his expressed faith in this instance amounts to a conceptual diminution through the proclivity to explain away, rather than to experience. Arguably, it does not – the atheistically inclined contemporary reader may deny the concepts of "Sünde" and of transcendent justice, but the religious standpoint here does not deny – or repress – the social import of the murder: it implicitly acknowledges justice to be beyond the human scope yet does not polemicise against the potential necessity for protection or restraint. Focus, rather, remains on the psychological discourse through the use initially of a double metaphor: tobacco lights up like a large, glowing eye to symbolise the ability to see through the figurative darkness constellated by the locals' gossiping. Further, the perpetrators of character assassination, likened to ravens feasting on carrion, are deeply censured by Eichborn, who equates their act with murder. An alternative discourse is here, possibly inadvertently, peripherally constellated, which posits consciousness, expressed through speech, as energy: it has real effects and is therefore subject to ethical responsibility. Notably, due to the addition of the religious premise, this responsibility is viewed not as requiring censorship – God is there for judgement – but in terms of an inevitable, internal accountability.

Wohlers's discomfiture is consequentially accompanied by a desire to master it by exercising control, which proceeds manipulatively. He attempts to establish himself as the arbiter of decency, of "rechtschaffende Menschen", by stipulating the behaviour that characterises them: their avoidance of the dark. Ironically, it is a condition which he is

himself transgressing as he pronounces it. A cause-and-effect chain becomes apparent, in which prejudice not only enhances susceptibility, but also predisposes to the propensity to operate control mechanisms that are inherently devoid of self-reflection. The sinister import of this constellation becomes apparent when Wohlers's attempt to control and recruit fails. In fury, he hurls a stone at the shepherd, to demonstrate the ferocity with which the investment in self-exoneration is defended. The narrative conspires towards irony when the tailor is told on the following morning that the shepherd had been found dead and remembers attacking him. He imagines himself persecuted in Andreas Ellern's stead:

Herrgott im Himmel! Soll es ihm auch einmal so gehen wie den Verbrechern, von denen er machmal in der Zeitung gelesen? Er las die Mord- und Hinrichtungsgeschichten immer so gern, denn er fühlte sich selbst im Vergleich zu den Mördern so besonders tugendhaft, und nun sollte er auch in die Zeitung kommen? (GW, p. 25)

Since for him there exists only two mutually exclusive opposites, "Tugend" and "Verbrecher", or social approval and ostracism, he is unable to countenance the new situation:

Plötzlich hatte er entdeckt, was er halb in Gedanken schon lange suchte. Es war ein großer Messinghaken, an dem einige Kleidungsstücke der Kinder hingen, und den er sich selbst einmal aus der Stadt mitgebracht hatte, weil er so schön stark war. "An dem kann man sich aufhängen, ohne daß der Haken nachgibt" hatte er damals gesagt [...]. (GW, pp. 25-6)

The fact that Eichborn turns out to be grievously injured rather than dead does not relieve his mind. Aided by alcohol, he eventually turns to the thought of murdering the shepherd before he can reveal who his attacker had been. This narrative strand, which is presented interspersed with other contingent plots, traces how personal thought habits tend to serve as the unconscious standard for assumptions about the behaviour of others:

Er traute allen Menschen eigentlich nur Schlechtes zu [...] wie er selbst niemals eine Beleidigung vergaß, so glaubte er auch nicht, daß andere dies könnten. (GW, p. 57)

The observation once again deliberately articulates a behavioural norm that operates sub-cognitively by narrating, by example, its potential effects. A lucid psychological insight, however, is in this case conditioned by the assumption that an alternative to this *modus operandi* is genuinely possible by the superimposition of a specific belief system.

The strangely self-contradictory gist of *Gottes Wege*, the apparent unawareness of imposed doctrine as another form of self-alienation, becomes particularly evident in the positively-connoted protagonists of the narrative. Thus Elsbeth remains loyal to Andreas in spite of her father's hostility towards him, but, due to her piety, simultaneously accepts parental authority and filial duty as divine law, and therefore finds herself in a state of ethical suspense. The infantilism of her religious belief becomes apparent when she tries to support Andreas on the point of his arrest:

"Aber Gott wird dir helfen, dies schwere Leid zu tragen!" "Gott!" wieder lachte Andreas höhnisch. "Wenn Gott zuläßt, daß man mich so verleumden kann, dann wird er sich auch nicht darum kümmern, was nun aus mir wird!" Elsbeth versuchte dem jungen Manne zuzureden; sie wollte ihn trösten und ihm sagen, daß der liebe Gott manchmal die Ungerechtigkeit Herr werden läßt, aber nur um später seine göttliche Liebe so recht in ihrer Herrlichkeit zu zeigen; aber Andreas hörte nicht auf sie. (GW, pp. 18-9)

A contractive quality becomes apparent in the narrative because this type of conceptualising of faith is maintained without apparent awareness of its problematics, such as the sacrifice of empathy as consequence of religious conviction. Elsbeth's focus is solely the specificity of her own conviction; the internal reality of Andreas's experience is denied through the superimposition of a belief that would allow him to view his situation disingenuously. Similarly, Eichborn perceives himself as having been attacked simply because his life-long health had made him intolerant of frailty, so that "der liebe Gott mich in die Schule genommen [hat]" (GW, p. 29). A strangely staged and self-contradictive version of humility is constellated here: a simple-minded explanation implicitly asserts the qualification to judge divine motive, and ironically posits an equal, if not superior conceptual position in respect of it. The archetypal old

wise man Eichborn therefore ultimately develops from iconoclast to a restricted, pontificating character in spite of the benevolence he personifies. He counsels Andreas, who, once exonerated, feels bitter about the circumstances of his indictment:

“Weißt du, wie Mutter Liese mein Messer bekommen hat? Als ich sie im Winter einmal aus dem Wasser zog, verlor ich es aus der Tasche, und die Alte hat es sich gleich mitgenommen. So bin ich nur, weil ich gutmütig war, in den schlimmen Verdacht des Mordes gekommen” – “Nicht weil du gutmütig warst, bist du in den Verdacht gekommen, sondern weil Gott einmal sehen wollte, mein Junge, wie du dich in Kreuz und Trübsal benähmest.” (GW, p. 83)

The conceptual alignment of belief and truth here remains unquestioned, to construct dogmatism as aesthetic constraint. The narrative’s often lucid psychological observations arguably *are* diminished where they are subsumed by statements of faith that posit an authoritarian, petty, transcendent yet invariably personalised God, whose motives are readily accessible and whose goodness is largely measured by ‘His’ concordance with personal wishes. The socio-historic context, on the other hand, adds a dimension essential to an appreciation of this text: the narratorial aim is to affirm religious values for moral sustenance and exhortation at a time of increasing, and ultimately calamitous social and political chaos.

While a diminution of narrative import is observable in specific, simplistic religious sentiments, the underlying spiritual tenets of *Gottes Wege* can hardly be termed negligible or irrelevant – the problem here lies in style, rather than in content. When Wohlers arrives at the injured shepherd’s hut with a hammer, Eichborn is initially glad to see him:

Der Schäfer nahm die Brille ab, mit der nicht gut in die Ferne sehen konnte, und dann flog ein halbes Lächeln über sein verwittertes Gesicht. “Na, Schneidermeister, du magst wohl nicht hereinkommen, und verdienen will ich es dir nicht, – denn du hast dich wie ein Junge benommen, wie ein richtiger Junge. Wer wirft denn noch mit Steinen, wenn man Frau und Kinder hat!” (GW, p. 60)

Wohlers is permitted to remain human: even though he has grievously assaulted the shepherd, the latter does not exercise inner dislocation and vilification by marking his assailant as *other*, and avoids recourse to official authority. The way in which *Gottes*

Wege here mounts resistant practice may be taken from the contrast between this narrative's discourse and collective psychological developments then taking place in the "dominant metropolitan center",<sup>14</sup> Berlin. Volker Ullrich's description of Wilhelmine academic institutions identifies the "autoritärer Sozialcharakter" that was being fostered in them. Ullrich makes clear the psychological implications of procedures employed there, which provides a useful point of comparison to the alternative social character envisaged in *Gottes Wege*

Die Prägestätten dieses Sozialisationstypus waren die Universitäten, genauer, die studentischen Korporationen, und die Armee. Die schlagenden Verbindungen waren nicht nur, wie Max Weber bissig anmerkte, 'Avancementsversicherungsanstalten'; in ihnen wurden die Probanden, vor allem über den Ritus der Mensur, einer Abhärtungsdressur unterworfen, die auf die gesamte Persönlichkeit deformierend und verrohend wirken musste. Zu Recht hat Norbert Elias in seinen *Studien über die Deutschen* darin eine Wurzel für die Entzivilisierung der deutschen Gesellschaft gesehen: 'Wer sich schwach zeigte, galt nichts. Im Grunde wurden Menschen hier dazu erzogen, sowie sie sich einem Schwächeren gegenüber wussten, hart zuzuschlagen, ihn die eigene Überlegenheit und seine Unterlegenheit alsbald und unzweideutig fühlen zu lassen. Das nicht zu tun war Schwäche; und Schwäche war etwas Verächtliches.'<sup>15</sup>

Resistant practice, in response to such a socio-political environment, can and did take a valuable, exhortative form in the sustained observation of such personality aberrations.<sup>16</sup> *Gottes Wege*, by examining the dynamics of gossip, conversely critiques a set of older, though by no means culturally surpassed behaviours that manifest most obviously in smaller communities.<sup>17</sup> This fact does not make it irrelevant to the wider contexts of its time: on the one hand, the narrative implicitly portrays a collective psychology that does not equate violence with authority – physical and psychological forms of violence are themselves the aberration throughout this novella – and in this sense it provides, or reminds of, a vital conceptual alternative. On the other hand, its chief spiritual message is the tenet of forgiveness. These themes combine to establish a narrative discourse the significance of which is more complex than first appears.

<sup>14</sup> Josephine Donovan. *European Local-Color Literature*, New York: Continuum, 2010, p. x.

<sup>15</sup> Volker Ullrich. "Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?" in: <<http://www.zeit.de/zeit-geschichte/2010/04/Das-Essay/seite-2>>. Accessed 18 June 2014.

<sup>16</sup> The text referred to H. Mann's novel *Der Untertan*. (Cf. Heinrich Mann. *Der Untertan*. Leipzig: K. Wolff, 1918.)

<sup>17</sup> It may be remembered that Niese's first-hand insights into the propensity to gossip and to create sensation was the town of Burg, where she lived during her formative years.

*Gottes Wege* was republished in 1917 after having been out of print for over a decade. It was therefore deliberately released into an environment of increasing collective recrimination and retaliation. Volker Ullrich highlights that anti-Semitism and anti-Socialism came to be used as a political tool towards the end of the First World War, to approach a state of collective paranoia:

Direkt bedrohlich wurde es für die deutschen Juden am Ende des Krieges, als Alldeutsche und Rechtskreise sich dazu entschlossen, die Juden zu Sündenböcken für die militärische Niederlage zu stempeln. 'Flugblätter werden verteilt, die zur Judenhetze auffordern, sie kommen von den Rechtsparteien, die den Zorn des Volkes ablenken wollen, der alte geschichtliche Kniff', berichtete Betty Scholem in einem Brief an ihren Sohn Gerhard aus Berlin. Der Antisemitismus verband sich mit der Dolchstoßlegende, also dem Vorwurf, das deutsche Heer sei durch die »Wühlarbeit« von Juden und Linken hinterrücks um die Früchte des Sieges gebracht worden. Beides, die Hetze gegen Juden und Linke, wurde nun zusammengezogen zu einer Hassformel von ungeheurer Aggressivität und Destruktivität.<sup>18</sup>

A "Hassformel", which serves extreme destructive emotions and constructs an *other* who can serve as a repository for blame – specific scapegoats – is in this socio-political context readily recognisable as a collective form of shadow projection. The same psychological phenomenology, however, forms a major thematic complex of *Gottes Wege*, in which one individual is rapidly ostracised on essentially arbitrary grounds, to be imbued with evil, in consequence of which the locals are likened to ravens on a corpse who, as shepherd Eichborn allegorises, "pickten das Fleisch von den Knochen" (GW, p. 20). The portrayal of this dynamic is pertinent to the socio-political situation, yet this may be only indirectly apparent, not only due to differences in scale and intensity. Shadow projection, as a psychological mechanism, is difficult to acknowledge and accept, in spite of its ubiquity. The implication of such an acknowledgement is "the tremendous revolution of values that has been brought about by the discovery of the unconscious."<sup>19</sup> Gerhard Adler observes:

The basic problem of modern man is the problem of evil: conventional ethics have proved incapable of containing or transforming its destructive forces. But the 'dark' side has invaded the world image of modern man with a vengeance, and no longer is he certain of his position regarding good and evil. [...] Awareness of evil

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<sup>18</sup> Ullrich, "Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?", in: <<http://www.zeit.de/zeit-geschichte/2010/04/Das-Essay/seite-5>>. Accessed 18 June 2014.

<sup>19</sup> Carl Gustav Jung. "Foreword", in: Erich Neumann. *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic*. London/Boston: Shambhala, 1990, p. 12.

challenges the individual: he has to learn to realise, acknowledge and live with his own dark side. Instead of suppressing, or repressing, the shadow and consequently projecting it outside, it has to be integrated. Only thus can modern man achieve fuller consciousness and a higher degree of integration; the ambiguity of one's own existence, the awareness of both positive and negative forces within the individual becomes the point of departure for a new ethical attitude. In Neumann's words: 'Acceptance of the shadow is the essential basis for the actual achievement of an ethical attitude towards the 'Thou' who is outside me.'<sup>20</sup>

However, a common critical as well as popular response to the shadow projections that have occurred in Germany, in this case in the aftermath of the First World War, is to attribute these as non-transferable phenomena. Ironically, this stance in effect constellates German society as *other* and perpetuates the negative situation it ostensibly attacks. It does not, however, constitute a harmless act of self-exoneration, but one which comes at a hidden cost that has been discussed in detail, for instance, by Carl Jung, Erich Neumann and Gerhard Adler.<sup>21</sup> Analysis, the import of which is ultimately confined to accusation and moral censure, can be characterised as a psychological orientation invested in locating and maintaining an *other*.

*Gottes Wege* may be termed self-limiting in respect of its simplistic religious specificities. Articulations of simplistic certainty are not designed, and perhaps were not

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<sup>20</sup> Gerhard Adler, "Foreword to this Edition", in: Neumann. *Depth Psychology*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>21</sup> Jung widened the debate about the problematics of "conventional ethics" in 1964: "Our times have demonstrated what it means for the gates of the underworld to be opened. Things whose enormity nobody could have imagined [...] have turned our world upside down. Ever since, the world has remained in a state of schizophrenia. Not only has civilized Germany disgorged its terrible primitivity, but Russia is also ruled by it, and Africa has been set on fire." (Carl Gustav Jung. *Man and His Symbols*. London: Picador, 1978, pp. 83-4.) – Jung here enlarges on the concept of collective schizophrenia in respect of the split between East and West: "Western man, becoming aware of the aggressive will to power of the East, sees himself forced to take extraordinary measures of defense, at the same time as he prides himself on his virtue and good intentions. What he fails to see is that it is his own vices, which he has covered up by good international manners, that are thrown back in his face by the communist world, shamelessly and methodically. What the West has tolerated, but secretly and with a slight sense of shame (the diplomatic lie, systematic deception, veiled threats), comes back into the open and in full measure from the East and ties us up in neurotic knots. It is the face of his own evil shadow that grins at Western man from the other side of the Iron Curtain." (Jung, *Man and His Symbols*, p. 73.) – The concept of collective schizophrenia retains stark relevance in view of the continued existence of extreme international polarities, the specifics rather than dynamic of which changes. Regarding an adequate response to this dilemma, Jung expounds: "the difficulties confronting us are moral problems [...] attempts to answer them by a policy of piling up nuclear arms or by economic 'competition' is achieving little, for it cuts both ways. [...] all such attempts have proved singularly ineffective, and will do so as long as we try to convince ourselves and the world that it is only they (i.e. our opponents) who are wrong. It would be much more to the point for us to make a serious attempt to recognize our own shadow and its nefarious doings. If we could see our shadow (the dark side of our nature), we should be immune to any moral and mental infection and insinuation. As matters now stand, we lay ourselves open to every infection, because we are really doing practically the same thing as *they*. Only we have the additional disadvantage that we neither see nor want to understand what we ourselves are doing, under the cover of good manners." (Jung, *Man and His Symbols*, p. 73.) – Arguably, these observations envisage a psychology the implications of which not only were, but are revolutionary when considering the prevalent national and international status quo of attitude and behaviour.



intended, to engage with those epistemological debates which, according to theologian Ernst Troeltsch in the late 1880s, were causing “all aspects of life [...] to sway”.<sup>22</sup> Yet the religious world-view is not conceptually inferior to the mechanistic one *per se*:

How do we know that such ideas are not true? Many people would agree with me if I stated flatly that such ideas are probably illusions. What they fail to realize is that the denial is as impossible to ‘prove’ as the assertion of religious belief. We are entirely free to choose which point of view we take; it will in any case be an arbitrary decision.<sup>23</sup>

The narrative insistence on faith at a time when the mechanistic view was gaining the upperhand across the social strata can itself be seen as resistance to “metropolitan pressure to conform to imposed standards”.<sup>24</sup> The target demographic of *Gottes Wege* was an expanded one, which addressed readers across the social spectrum who were non-committal about, or subscribed to, the Protestant faith. Subtitled “Erzählung für das Volk”, the reading recommendations appended to the narrative advertise their usefulness to teachers and parents (cf. GW, p. 93) and includes essays and commentaries by theologians, to suggest that the readership of *Gottes Wege* varied significantly in terms of educational status and both its spiritual tenets and psychological observations. In *literary*-historical terms, a point of interest emerges, further, from the very fracture between the narrative or plot and the application of specific dogma. As early twentieth-century example of *Heimatliteratur* and *Erbauungsschrift*, *Gottes Wege* testifies to the conceptual diversity of a genre that tends to be one-dimensionally typified in terms of an ideology that spells racism.

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<sup>22</sup> Ernst Troeltsch, quoted in: Volker Berghahn. *Imperial Germany*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1994, p. 172.

<sup>23</sup> Jung, *Man and His Symbols*, p. 76.

<sup>24</sup> Donovan, *European Local-Color Literature*, p. x.

*Das Lagerkind*<sup>25</sup> appeared as part of a series of narratives referred to by Kammerhof as “die wertvollen Mainzer Volks- und Jugendbücher”.<sup>26</sup> Agnes Harder receives this series in *Deutscher Frauenbund*:

Die Bücher aus dem Verlage von Jos[ef] Scholz, Mainz, mögen bei Kleinen und Großen anklopfen, sie sind immer wert, daß ihnen aufgemacht wird. Dem Kinde vermitteln sie eine wahre Anschauung der Dinge, die es umgeben. Dem Heranwachsenden weiten sie Kopf und Herz für Heimat und heimische Geschichte. In den Volks- und Jugendbüchern aber fügen sie noch jenen Idealismus hinzu, den wir mit Bangen in unserem Vaterlande schwinden sehen, und der doch recht eigentlich deutsches Erbe ist. (LK, p. 196)

It is evident from her comments that *Heimatliteratur* was perceived in terms of an educational remit – alongside its portrayals of indigenous culture, it is here implicitly allied with literary realism, as well as with the notion of a long philosophical tradition of idealism. Further, historical narrative is uniquely suited to the genre. Consequently, Harder views high quality exponents of the genre as serving as a bulwark against the rise of materialism, social polarisation, utilitarianism and consumer culture – in other words, as maintaining humane and transcendent values against the social ills associated with industrialisation. It is notable that the implied readership of *Das Lagerkind*,<sup>27</sup> a regionally-specific historical narrative in the publication context of the “Mainzer Volks- und Jugendbücher”, transcends both social and generational barriers. Adolescents and adults from the bourgeois-orientated new middle-class, as well as readers from the working classes and lower strata of *Angestellte*<sup>28</sup> are encompassed

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<sup>25</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Das Lagerkind. Geschichte aus dem deutschen Krieg*. Mainz. Scholz: 1914. (Henceforth: LK)

<sup>26</sup> Erich Kammerhof. “Charlotte Niese”, in: Hermann Graef (ed.). *Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte*. (Vol. 67, Rudolf Eichler (ed.)) Leipzig: Verlag für Literatur, Kunst und Musik, 1910, p. 14.

<sup>27</sup> The enduring popularity of historical and adventure narratives can be taken from the presence of authors such as Alexandre Dumas, Luise Mühlbach, Felix Dahn, Oskar Meding [writing under the pseudonym Gregor Samarow] and Henryk Sienkiewicz among others as the “meistgelesenen” of Leihbibliotheken between 1849 and 1914. (Cf. for instance, Alberto Martino. *Die deutsche Leihbibliothek. Geschichte einer literarischen Institution (1756-1914)*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1990, pp. 410-15.)

<sup>28</sup> It will also be remembered that, bearing in mind the limitations previously observed (cf. “Introduction”, p. 25), a “Prozeß der Demokratisierung des Lesens” began “nach der Aufhebung des Sozialistengesetzes (1890), a process that ensued with “regionale[n] und konfessionelle[n] Phasenverschiebungen und Klassen- und Berufsunterschiede[n] im Konsum von Lesestoffen”, which led to a marked increase of “Arbeiterbibliotheken”. (Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 306.) The boundaries between the reading preferences

by its publication circumstance. This porous publication circumstance is worth juxtaposing with socio-political events concurrently impacting on the development of *Angestellte* as a demographic. Hans Speier notes a marked collective momentum towards the political left in the second decade of the twentieth century:

The measures that the employees' associations adopted to counter the economic hardships of their members began to jeopardize their traditional, trusting relationship with employers in the middle-class associations and at the same time led to a noticeable growth in membership of the real employees' trade unions, especially Butib, the ZdH, and the Verband der Büroangestellten. From 1913 to 1918 the AfA associations increased from 80,000 to 146,000 members, whereas the total membership of middle-class commercial associations decreased from 450,000 to 437,000. [...] The Study Group (Arbeitsgemeinschaft), founded as early as 1913 [...] united the small, radical associations of white-collar workers and became the forerunner of the free trade unionist Afa-Bund.<sup>29</sup>

The, albeit temporary, narrowing of the gap between proletariat and new middle class had a conceptual echo in the term "Volk", a term which, theoretically at least, levels hierarchical, as well as ideological and confessional differences.<sup>30</sup> In the publication context of *Gottes Wege*, the term would *affectively* and subliminally have supported a

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of members of the working classes and various strata of *Angestellten* were therefore increasingly porous, to challenge the notion of a clearly identifiable new middle-class *Heimatliteratur* demographic. Lists of the "meistgelesenen Bücher *Schöner Literatur*" [sic.] in "37 Gewerkschafts- und sozialdemokratischen Arbeitervereinsbibliotheken (24615 Mitglieder; 3982 Leser, 21 805 Bände; 35 722 Ausleihungen) im Jahre 1898" evidence heterogeneous preferences; the top ten authors here are, in descending order, Emile Zola, Jules Verne, Eugenie Marlitt, Friedrich Gerstäcker, Heinrich Heine, Friedrich Spielhagen, August Auerbach, Gustav Freytag, Walter Scott and Friedrich Hackländer. (Cf. Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 444.) An intriguing glimpse into the taste for historical, regional and adventure narratives is afforded by a further list, which does not prioritise "Schöne Literatur". The "Ottendorfsche Volksbibliothek in Zittau (Verwaltungsjahr 1898-1899)" features Karl May, Felix Dahn and Friedrich Spielhagen, as also Peter Rosegger and Ludwig Ganghofer among the top ten authors. (Cf. Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 447.) The survey of *Das literarische Echo* of 1903-1904 bears out the idea of an increasing democratisation of reading by asserting that "die Volksbibliotheken und öffentlichen Lesehallen meldeten als bevorzugte Bücher durchschnittlich ziemlich dieselben wie die privaten Leihbibliotheken und Lesezirkel" and that "die meistgeliehenen Bücher" of this year were also "die meistgekauften" (Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 483).

<sup>29</sup> Hans Speier, *German White-Collar Workers and the Rise of Hitler*. London/New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986, p. 124.

<sup>30</sup> The term was indeed used in this levelling sense in William II's "Balkonrede", as well as "Thronrede", on the eve of WWI. The imminent crisis exposed the essential artificiality of hierarchical social distinctions and the term "Volk" served to underline the denial of difference, which was as expedient as it was urgent: "Ich kenne keine Partei mehr, ich kenne nur Deutsche [...] ohne Parteiunterschied, ohne Stammesunterschiede, ohne Konfessionsunterschied [...]. ( *Verhandlungen des Reichstags, Stenographische Berichte*, 1914/16. Vol. 306, pp. 1f.) He did not invent these connotations, of course, but made use of existing semantic contexts. – Two observations should here be added. Firstly, this 'official levelling', unsurprisingly, did not amount to a permanently transformed status quo, as Hans Speier observes: "Following the revolution at the end of the war, discrimination again increased." (Hans Speier, *German White-Collar Workers and the Rise of Hitler*. London/New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986, p. 114.) Secondly, the connotations of "Volk" in the Wilhelmine period and during the Weimar Republic are not identical, notwithstanding, for instance, the espousal by the DHV of "völkisch" ideas" as part of its official ideology since the 1890s, which caused its members to be "well prepared for the infusion of the völkisch idea with the anti-modern pseudo-mythology of blood and race [...] during the last years of the Weimar Republic." Rather, a "political falsification of the Volk concept", as also the "falsification of the meaning 'military'" was at that time "accomplished by eager writers." (Speier, *German White-Collar Workers*, p. 116.)

sense of connectedness, rather than the traditional segregationist aspirations that were to prove both illusory and fateful for the new middle class.<sup>31</sup> “Volk” and “Volksbuch”, in terms of the social cohesiveness and permeability it assumes and implicitly constructs, can be interpreted as one of the “entwicklungsfähige Momente”, or, more pessimistically, as one of the “verschüttete Möglichkeiten” of the late *Kaiserreich*.<sup>32</sup> Simultaneously, the implicit refutation by the “Mainzer Volks- und Jugendbücher” remit, that accessibility and literary quality are mutually exclusive, contradicts traditional aesthetic perceptions concerning the schism between “Schöne Literatur” on the one hand, and “Trivallliteratur” on the other. Contextual specificity here therefore provides a glimpse of conceptual heterogeneity, which is greater than that which has generally been projected on to Wilhelmine regionally-based popular literature.

A high-profile review of the “Mainzer” series, which appeared in the Berlin newspaper *Der Tag*, accurately summarises stylistic aspects of *Das Lagerkind*. Gabriele Reuter,<sup>33</sup> while noting cultural-historical import, focuses on characteristic story-telling devices:

Ich kann mir [...] keine köstlichere Lektüre vorstellen als diese kulturhistorischen abenteuerreichen Geschichten, deren jede von einem kräftigen dichterischen Gedanken eine höhere Weihe empfängt. Wuchtige Naturschilderungen, eine spannende Handlung, eine Fülle prächtig geschauter, oft sehr fein psychologisch durchgeführter Gestalten heben diese Sammlung, zu der sehr gute Erzähler

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<sup>31</sup> Speier notes that during the Weimar Republic, for a “majority of white-collar workers” segregationism increased as “social superiority over blue-collar workers [...] grew more urgent in response to their pressing insecurity and to the simultaneous increase in the power and prestige of the workers” (Speier, *German White-Collar Workers*, p. 115). In the belief that the NSDAP would secure this superiority, he recalls the “appeal of National Socialism to members of the DHV and the GdA and to unorganized white-collar workers” and draws attention to “the DHV’s contribution to disseminating the national Socialist creed” (Speier, *German White-Collar Workers*, p. xxi). That any belief in fascist support of union interests was fallacious can be taken from the fact that trade unions were rapidly destroyed by a “newly sanctioned political ruthlessness [which] eliminated all resistance” after Hitler came into power. (Speier, *German White-Collar Workers*, p. 154.) The “leader of the white-collar workers in the DAF”, the massive amalgamative organisation that took the place of the numerous existing associations and which in its final form “had about 25 million members, almost half the German people” (Speier, *German White-Collar Workers*, p. 157), made the position clear by stating that “agreement between the individual organizations [!] and the government was necessary, for these organizations must be not ends in themselves, but exclusively means toward the end of national resurrection” (Speier, *German White-Collar Workers*, p. 155).

<sup>32</sup> Volker Ullrich. “Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?”, in: <<http://www.zeit.de/zeit-geschichte/2010/04/Das-Essay/seite-1>>. Accessed 18 June 2014. As already mentioned, the ambiguous and hence manipulable term “Volk” had not yet been substantially colonised – the contention here is that its potentialities remained both positive and negative prior to concerted demagoguery within a dictatorial environment.

<sup>33</sup> Gabriele Reuter, who was associated with the avant-garde and passionately interested in the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche in the 1890s, first created a sensation with her gender critique in 1895. (Cf. Gabriele Reuter. *Aus guter Familie*. Berlin: Fischer, 1895.) – For further discussions of this author, cf. also “Individuality and Gender in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*”, pp. 300-1, 320, 325.

beisteuerten, weit über den Durchschnitt alltäglicher Jugendlektüre. (Reprinted in LK, p. 196)

In *Das Lagerkind*, Charlotte Niese's style is recognisable in that straightforward narration<sup>34</sup> and a heroic, and even romantic gist is attended by psychological depth and social ambivalence more characteristic of a naturalist text, conventions of which are borrowed, probably beyond what Kammerhof would have termed "befruchtend und befreiend".<sup>35</sup> The novel, largely chronologically, relates the life-trajectory of Walburg Rantzau, in her youth known as "Burga". Narrative time is three hundred years in the past and spans the final phase of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), a short intervening period of peace, and the first phase of the Nordic wars, specifically the period spanning 1655-1660.<sup>36</sup> The term "Lagerkind", which refers to the novel's main protagonist, is elucidated as one of the tragic consequences of the Thirty Years' War:

Hinter jedem Heer folgten Scharen von Menschen, die man den Troß nannte. Mit ihm waren kleine und halb erwachsene Kinder, Frauen und manchmal auch alte Leute. Sie hatten keine Heimat, weil die ihre zerstört war. Sie liefen mit den Soldaten, und wo diese einen Besitz, einen Bauernhof fanden, an dem noch etwas zu rauben war, da holte sich der Troß nachher die letzten Reste. (LK, p. 8)

Samuel Gardiner confirms the existence of such camps, or "Lager", and observes the scale of the phenomenon:

In the later years of the war it was known that a body of 40,000 fighting men drew along with it a loathsome following of no less than 140,000 men, women, and children [...] all of them living at the expense of the miserable peasants who still contrived to hold on to their ruined fields.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Karl-Wilhelm Klahn highlights Niese's view of styles of narration: "Die um 1890-1910 so beliebte 'Schwülstigkeit', die ihr literarisches 'Ansehen' sicher in höhere Sphären getragen hätte, mokierte sie mit dem Ausspruch: 'Mir ist öfter gesagt worden, ich müßte dem 'Zeitgeist' Konzessionen machen und etwas 'schwüler' schreiben. Hierzu bin ich nicht imstande und bedaure diese Unfähigkeit durchaus nicht.'" (Charlotte Niese, quoted by Klahn, "Charlotte Niese", <[http://www.reisecenter-fehmarn.de/fehmarn-inselgeschichte\\_Charlotte+Niese+++Fehmarns+groesste+Schriftstellerin\\_239\\_2.html](http://www.reisecenter-fehmarn.de/fehmarn-inselgeschichte_Charlotte+Niese+++Fehmarns+groesste+Schriftstellerin_239_2.html)>.)

<sup>35</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> Sigfrid Henry Steinbeck describes the Nordic conflicts as ensuing initially with the ill-advised challenge to the Swedish throne by already beleaguered Polish King John II Casimir in 1654. The Swedish Charles X Gustavus used the challenge to re-employ "tens of thousands of returned officers and soldiers [...] not yet re-integrated into the economic life of the country", and instigated a "series of lightning campaigns" so violent as almost to bring about the dissolution of the Polish state. According to Steinbeck, "the very extent of the Swedish success caused a reversal", initially to mobilise Russia and Austria against Sweden. It is the conflict that ensued after Frederick William of Brandenburg changed sides to join Denmark, which gave rise to an "anti-Swedish alliance of Austria, Poland, Brandenburg and the Netherlands" that is referred to in the final part of *Das Lagerkind*. (Sigfrid Henry Steinbeck. *The Thirty Years War and the Conflict for European Hegemony 1600-1660*. London: Edward Arnold, 1981, pp. 88-9.)

<sup>37</sup> Samuel Rawson Gardiner. *The Thirty Years' War 1618-1648*. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1877, p. 213.

Burga's childhood years are related in terms of this roaming existence. While she is generally exonerated of robbing peasants, and instead begs and forages, including the belongings of dead soldiers, Gardiner's observation is corroborated in the novel:

Burga war von jeder Tür gewiesen worden. Es war den Fischern nicht zu verdenken. Der Elbarm, der die Insel vom Herzogtum Lüneburg trennte, war [...] zugefroren, und böses Gesindel schlich sich herum. Die Leute vom Troß waren oft noch schlimmer, als die Soldaten selbst. Es waren boshafte Kinder darunter, die Feuer ansteckten und unschuldige Tiere quälten; die Gutes mit Bösem vergaltten und kein Gefühl zu haben schienen. (LK, p. 14)

The addition that these children appeared to be without feeling is significant, since it implicitly refers to their psychological degradation on account of traumatic experience, and avoids a simplistic construction of malice and virtue. Thus Burga's initial experience includes starvation, as well as rejection and violence as norm. "Sie war gewohnt, geschlagen und gestoßen zu werden" (LK, p. 15) and "wußte nachgerade so viel vom Krieg, daß sie es den Leuten kaum verdenken konnte, wenn sie sie hungern ließen." (LK, p. 14). Having most recently been somewhere south, in answer to her query where to go next, a fisherman's son and his father demonstrate local fear and aversion. Anxious to get rid of her, the son urges her to "geh nur nach drüben, nach Holstein. Da ist es viel besser als hier. Da sind Wälder, und Wölfe, und Fuchse, und Schweine. Es ist sehr gut da!" (LK, p. 16), while his father "drohte Burga mit dem Ruder", and

wies auf das andre Ufer. "Geh du nur nach Holstein! Das Eis hält noch, und du kannst vielleicht ein Unterkommen finden!" Sie zögerte ein wenig. Grau und kalt lag die Eisfläche der Elbe vor ihr. Sie war rau und uneben: Steine und Schneeberge lagen auf ihr, und hin und wieder ging es wie ein dumpfes Grollen durch den unter dem Eis schlafenden Fluß. Der rauhe Wintertag ging zu Ende. [...] Der kleine Klas Stolz sah ihr nach. "Vater, wenn die man rüber kommt. Das Eis hat schon geschrien." Sein Vater zuckte die Achseln. "Was gehts uns an? [...]" (LK, p. 18)

Internalised perspective here adds a forceful impression of the reality of her drifting existence, including its spatial scope and experiences of hostility. The animistic allusion to surface-ice that screams, significantly portrayed as an indigeneous viewpoint,<sup>38</sup> adds impact to effect a "wuchtige Naturschilderung" as lauded by Reuter, and invites reader

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<sup>38</sup> Animism is identifiable as a "marginal, local, alternative knowledge that is cast in opposition to unifying translocal disciplines." (Donovan, *European Local-Color Literature*, p. xi.)

engagement and affective response through a sense of immediacy, both in the uncertainty and natural beauty constructed. “Spannende Handlung” similarly ensues early on in the narrative: foreshadowed by the above related episode, Burga’s subsequent experiences involve narrow escapes, first from drowning in the Elbe, and subsequently from wolves in the Holstein forest. The earlier narrative exposition enriches these situations, since, again to quote Reuter, they involve the viewpoints of “fein psychologisch durchgeführte[] Gestalten”, and indicate thematic material beyond that of simple adventure and – possibly ideologically charged – historical information.

Authenticity, a further important stylistic aspect of *Das Lagerkind*, can be seen to serve a *dual* purpose commensurate with its regional focus. Aside from accurately observed locations, examples are the use of historically verifiable family names; Niese may well have made use of genealogical records, which refer to marriages between individuals entitled “Buchwald” and “Rantzau” in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>39</sup> Both of these names are employed in the novel, the respective families being referred to as neighbours and “Vetter[n]” (LK, p. 151). Similarly, narration of socio-political and socio-historical circumstances pertaining to regional experience of political conflict generally concurs with historical documentation. In this respect, an indigeneous, politically naïve yet psychologically astute viewpoint is emphatically maintained throughout the novel. Thus “Christian der Vierte” turned “einmal zur Veränderung gegen die Schweden, mit denen er ehemals gut Freund gewesen war, und nun fielen diese als Feinde über Holstein her [...]” (LK, p. 8). The acerbic reference “einmal zur Veränderung” acknowledges the existence of political machinations,<sup>40</sup> while implying these to be

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. for instance, Kannegard. “Hans Adolph von Buchwald (1631-1679)”, in: *Skeel & Kannegaard Genealogy*. <<http://skeel.info/pedigree.php?personID=I18202&tree=ks>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013. <<http://skeel.info/pedigree.php?personID=I18202&tree=ks>>. Accessed 5 Sep 2013. – The life-dates of the historically recorded individuals located do not tally with the narrative time-frame; the referentiality therefore seems to end here.

<sup>40</sup> Geoffrey Parker and Simon Adams corroborate the narratorial allusion to Christian’s change of allegiance with an anti-Danish bias and put into question the friendly nature of political relations between these neighbours: “In 1643 Sweden suddenly went to war with Denmark. There were many reasons for this surprising development. Christian IV, his desire for foreign glory unquenched by either advancing years or previous defeats, had long made as much mischief for his northern neighbour as possible: he gave shelter to vengeful political enemies of the Stockholm government; he blockaded Sweden’s ally, the port of Hamburg; he harassed and even arrested Swedish shipping in the Baltic. When news leaked out

preposterous and worthy only of dismissal due to their wantonly destructive effects on real lives: “was die Kaiserlichen unverwüstet gelassen hatten, das wurde jetzt von den Schweden zerstört” (LK, p. 8). Crucially, nationalities are here levelled: the Habsburg and Swedish troops are equally devastating from the local point of view, while “die Soldaten überall wild und ungebärdig [waren]: die des eigenen Landes benahmen sich oft grade so schlecht, wie die Feinde” (LK, p. 48). Anchoring the narrative with accurate, regionally specific details thus is a stylistic aspect that not only advertises literary stature by demonstrating authorial research or historical knowledge. In the socio-historic context of *Das Lagerkind*, a sense of authenticity and immediacy is also used to present significant and surprising thematic material indirectly – potentially as a sub-text – while being designed to achieve maximum affective impact.

Given that *Das Lagerkind* is attributable to *Heimatkunst*, it will be apparent that both the novel’s temporal and spatial scope are unusual. Its named locations include the heavily fortified city of Hamburg, which is described as all but impenetrable;<sup>41</sup> its residents therefore are spared the atrocities that occur elsewhere. Further, Altona and Ottensen

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that Christian was secretly negotiating an alliance with the emperor, Sweden decided to strike first.” (Geoffrey Parker/Simon Adams. *The Thirty Years War*. London/Boston: Routledge, 1984, p. 152.) In David Maland’s view of the scenario, on the other hand, Swedish dominance was the deciding problematic. According to him, the Danish monarch, “lured by the offer of Bremen and Hamburg, had taken a few tentative steps towards a possible alliance with the emperor. Like the emperor, his prime concern was to weaken the power of Sweden.” (David Maland. *Europe at War 1600-1650*. London: Macmillan, 1980, p. 169.) That Hamburg was potentially a great prize and hence a crucial issue seems generally to be uncontested.

<sup>41</sup> Parker and Adams refer to defensive “walls [...] as much as 40 feet wide, 30 feet high and several miles long” being constructed around various cities on the eve of this war. In respect of Hamburg, they mention an intriguing eye witness statement: “When John Taylor, the English poet, humorist and traveller, visited Hamburg in 1617, he was astonished by the size of the army of artisans at work on the walls. ‘And when I perceived these fortifications I was amazed, for it is almost incredible for the number of men and horses that are daily set on work about it; besides, the work itself is so great that it is past the credit of report.’” (Taylor, quoted in: Parker/Adams, *The Thirty Years War*, p. 9.) Hans Günther Freitag notes that “Hamburg wird durch die Errichtung eines völlig neuen Befestigungsringes zu einer der stärksten Festungen Deutschlands und bleibt dadurch von den Verwüstungen des 30jährigen Krieges verschont.” (Hans Günther Freitag. *Hamburg. Porträt einer Weltstadt*. Hoffmann and Campe [1979], p. 220.) In actuality, Hamburg’s fortification, while formidable, probably constituted an impenetrability contingent on their being no concerted, sustained military assault. Steinbeck points out that for “Denmark’s neighbours [...] the neutrality of Hamburg was vital for the commercial relations with nominally hostile as well as supposedly friendly countries, which all belligerents maintained throughout the wars”, so that “Christian’s ruthless proceedings against Hamburg in May 1643 seems to have finally decided the Swedish council of state.” Steinbeck gives Christian’s ambition to control Hamburg as the reason for Sweden’s move against Denmark towards the end of the conflict. (Steinbeck, *The Thirty Years War*, p. 74.) The novel mentions sporadic attacks on the city by “irgend ein Häuflein [of Kaiserlichen or Schweden]”, which “wurde mit blutigen Köpfen heimgeschickt” (LK, p. 9), rather than major offensives.



are used for significant narrative episodes, along with other villages<sup>42</sup> flanking the river Elbe, the Finkenwärder Isle and surrounding rural areas. Holstein, also referred to as the “Holstenland” (LK, p. 108) is accurately described as an area with extensive forests, and the location of the “Troiburg”, Burga’s ultimate home, concurs with that of an actual ruin of the same name situated “bei Lügumkloster” (LK, p. 191), west of Visby in Northern Schleswig.<sup>43</sup> All these places serve as settings for sustained and significant narrative episodes, with Jutland being added as a frequent point of reference (cf. LK, pp. 150, 156, 180, 187). The use of multiple, trans-national settings throughout the narrative has the effect of depersonalising and denationalising the concept of “Heimat”. To complete a narrative summary, the two overall narrative focuses are the life trajectory of Burga and local experience of the consequences of political decisions. Beyond the initial series of adventures and vicissitudes experienced as “Lagerkind” in the wild, an initial rescue from this existence is effected by the widow Jutta Hanekamp, who lives with her two young sons on a concealed smallholding in the forest. This episode is followed by Burga’s temporary reversion to her old life, and followed by her reluctant acceptance of a second rescue by an ambivalently portrayed Hamburg merchant, whose life she had saved in the wild. At this moment, the freedom of the roaming existence is juxtaposed with the observation of social restrictions and relative moral corruption, engendered by bourgeois customs – “ihr kam es vor, als ginge sie in ein Gefängnis, und ihr Herz war schwer” (cf. LK, pp. 105-6). This point is worth emphasising briefly, because the import here constructed is not the contrast between ‘corrupt city and rural idyll’, but between life in wild, inhospitable nature which is devoid of customs and opportunities for emotional identification on the one hand, and a comfortable, secure urban existence that is beset by rules. Beyond Burga’s bourgeois experience in Hamburg, which spans adolescence and young adulthood, a romantic

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<sup>42</sup> Altona and Ottensen were of course still villages at this point, although Altona is related as growing rapidly (cf. for instance, LK, p. 86).

<sup>43</sup> Pictorial evidence of the ruin shows it to be surrounded by water, as observed in the novel (cf. LK, p. 179.) (Cf. Vivian Etting. “Renaissance Manor”, in: *1001 Stories About Denmark*. <[http://www.kulturarv.dk/1001fortaellinger/en\\_GB/troejborg-castle-ruins](http://www.kulturarv.dk/1001fortaellinger/en_GB/troejborg-castle-ruins)>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.) The narrative conclusion of *Das Lagerkind* refers to the building’s fall to ruin “sechzig Jahre” before publication in 1914, a circumstances also borne out by Etting, who notes that “Trojborg was demolished in 1854, as the state did not wish to take over the castle.” (Etting, “Renaissance Manor”).

narrative turn reveals her aristocratic origin and leads to her reunion with two remaining relatives, an ailing mother and a brother, who is “Rittmeister” in the Danish army (LK, p. 116). Having been lost as a small child during the attack and sacking of the “Finkenburg”, which lies “ganz im Norden des Landes, mitten auf dem Heidrücken und umgeben von dichten Waldungen” (LK, p. 142), mother and daughter eventually return to this area and live in the neighbouring “Troiburg”,<sup>44</sup> whose occupant Burga marries. There is no romantic ending, however; the narrative focus on Walburg’s life trajectory and individual development, as also with concurrent political events is maintained until the conclusion. While living in the Troiburg, the Nordic war begins, causing renewed devastation. Its effects are experienced by locals not as a separate conflict, but as yet another recurrence of a decades-long series of intermittent attacks. Its social effects are at this point observed from an externalised perspective, since the fortified manor is able to offer protection from attack for protagonists and local “Flüchtigen” (LK, p. 180). During this conflict, Polish troops, though ostensible allies of Denmark against Sweden, are related as devastating, since it is now they who make “keinen Unterschied [...] zwischen Freund und Feind” (LK, p. 185):

Sie waren allmählich wieder weiter gezogen, hatten aber das Land derartig verwüstet und die Bewohner getötet, daß man viele Meilen weit reiten konnte, ehe man auf ein menschliches Wesen traf. Und das war meistens so verängstigt, daß es in ein Dickicht oder in ein Moor schlüpfte, wohin man ihm nicht folgen konnte. (LK, p. 184)

The novel ultimately peters out, initially with the mundane circumstance of Walburg’s sons education and maturation (LK, p. 189), and ultimately with her old-age memories, death and funeral. These events are related through several jumps forward in time (cf. LK, pp. 188-91), and, although effected through omniscient narration, bring the focus back solely to Walburg. Since her development over the course of the novel is extensive, the narrative functions like a synthesis between a biographical novel and gendered appropriation of the *Bildungsroman*.

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<sup>44</sup> Heinz Wiese and Johann Bölts mention “das Gut Troiburg” as being located “nördlich Tondern im Herzogtum Schleswig”. (Heinz Wiese/Johann Bölts. *Rinderhandel und Rinderhaltung im nordwesteuropäischen Küstengebiet vom 15. Bis zum 19. Jahrhundert*. Stuttgart: Fischer, 1966, p. 47.) Etting notes that “the manor was actually built in the 1580s by nobleman Peter Rantzau” on top of “the remains of a medieval castle built in the first part of the 14th century.” (Etting, “Renaissance Manor”.)

A surprising thematic complex of *Das Lagerkind*, given the historical focus and trans-national settings of this narrative, is the depiction of the aristocracy in relation to the bourgeoisie in a sense that is relevant to this significant socio-historical aspect of Germany. The theme is important in the fiction of concurrent high-profile *Heimatliteratur* authors, such as Eugenie Marlitt and Ludwig Ganghofer,<sup>45</sup> where, likewise, it is used as a basis for social critique. *Das Lagerkind* is capable of including this aspect due to the incorporation of the “Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg”<sup>46</sup> alongside rural destitute peasants and dispossessed or pressured aristocrats. While Marlitt and Ganghofer tend to manifest partiality,<sup>47</sup> however, *Das Lagerkind* overall constructs shifting narrative priorities, in which both rurally-based aristocracy and urban merchants ultimately occur in terms of fallacies as well as strengths. The narrative societal basis is feudal; “Leibeigene” (LK, p. 167) and “Hörige” (LK, p. 169) appear in the context of aristocrats of Schleswig and Holstein,<sup>48</sup> who operate in close proximity to the Danish king (cf. LK, pp. 150, 180). The bourgeois lifestyle, of course, appears solely in the context of Hamburg merchants. The contrast between rural *freedom* and urban *restriction* is initially foregrounded in a context of psychological adaptation when the narrative casts several years forward in time:

Mit schwerem Herzen war Frau Jutta damals nach Hamburg gezogen und fand sich mühsam in das Leben einer engen Straße, grade wie ihr Konrad, der zuerst nur weinte und wieder davonlaufen wollte. Bis er sich allmählich daran gewöhnte, städtische Kleidung zu tragen; und jetzt war er Kaufmannslehrling, der auf die Bauern draußen im Lande etwas spöttisch herabsah. (LK, p. 115)

A subsequent exploration of temperamental differences between aristocracy and wealthy merchant introduces a historical aspect that *is* a commonly identified facet of

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. for instance, Eugenie Marlitt. *Goldelse*. Leipzig: Keil, 1867; Ludwig Ganghofer. *Das Schweigen im Walde*. Berlin: Grote, 1899.

<sup>46</sup> According to Hans Günther Freitag, Hamburg was termed a “de facto [...] freie Stadt” since 1292, and “Hansestadt” since 1321. (Freitag, *Hamburg*, pp. 218-9.) Percy Schramm emphasises early modern developments, according to which “erst nachdem Dänemark 1768 ausdrücklich auf seine Ansprüche verzichtet hatte, Hamburgs Reichsunmittelbarkeit auch der Form nach allseitig anerkannt [war].” (Percy Ernst Schramm. *Hamburg, Deutschland und die Welt. Leistung und Grenzen hanseatischen Bürgertums in der Zeit zwischen Napoleon I. und Bismarck*. Munich: Universitätsverlag Georg Callway, 1943, p. 16.)

<sup>47</sup> *Goldelse* constructs an overall anti-aristocratic gist, whereas *Das Schweigen im Walde* is pro-aristocratic.

<sup>48</sup> The “Rantzaus” are referred to as a “holsteinisches Geschlecht” (LK, p. 31) whose manor is in Schleswig; the “Buchwalds” are related solely to Schleswig.

*Heimatliteratur*. Burga's experience appears to specify a rejection of the city in favour of the country, when she, despite giving the appearance of perfect adaptation

oft oben auf dem Boden des hohen spitzen Hauses in der Domstraße stand und gen Westen blickte. Dorthin, wo das weite Land lag, die Dörfer Altona und Ottensen, wo der Tannenwald stand und wo einst die Wölfe hausten. Denn sie hatte noch immer nicht vergessen, daß sie einst ein Lagerkind war, und sehnte sich nach weiten Feldern und der Freiheit. (LK, pp. 115-6)

Her innate wildness is here attributed to formative experience. Familial ties, however, are added when the reunion with her family means "endlich eine echte Heimat" albeit one that "lag fremd und unbekannt vor ihr" (LK, p. 143). The answer to her conflict concerning parting from the comfortable life in Hamburg is symbolised in the reaction of "Wolf", her wolfhound, during the subsequent journey northwards to Schleswig:

Aber einer war ganz glücklich. Das war Wolf, der neben dem Wagen herlief und wieder jung wurde. In dem behäbigen Hamburg war auch er behäbig geworden. Das Umherstreifen in Feld und Flur hatte ihm gefehlt; gesittet in den Straßen zu wandern, war nicht nach seinem Geschmack gewesen [...] hier im Freien wurde er wieder wild, zeigte jedem, der ihm zu nahe treten wollte, die Zähne und hörte nur auf Burga. (LK, p. 144)

In this symbolic allusion to instinctual experience, the concurrence of environmental and hereditary factors in human experience are signalled. The military history of the aristocracy is subsequently referenced as inherent to Burga, as seen in her reactions during the journey:

Herrlich war es, morgens früh in die frische Natur zu fahren [...] wenn die Pferde mutig ihre Reiter weiter trugen, während diese ein Soldatenlied anstimmten und vom Krieg und Tod zu singen begannen, als wäre beides das beste auf der Welt. Dann summt Walburga das Lied leise mit, und als ihr Bruder ihr ein Pferd brachte [...] da schwang sie sich auf den Gaul, als habe sie im Leben nichts anderes getan, als mit den Dragonern zu reiten. (LK, p. 145)

Ambivalence, rather than advocacy is established, however, when the temperamental difference between aristocrat and merchant is focalised through Konrad Hanekamp, who, after being unexpectedly caught up in renewed regional hostilities several years later, comments:

"Du bist mehr für dies Leben geschaffen als ich, Walburg! Mir wird's sehr recht sein, wenn ich erst wieder daheim sitze und der Mutter und dem Oheim von meinen Erlebnissen berichten kann!" "Du bist doch sehr tapfer gewesen!" rief Frau Walburg, und Konrad lachte. "Ganz gewiß, ich laufe nicht weg, wenn der Feind

kommt; mein Pistol kann ich abschießen und den Degen ziehen. Es ist aber nicht mein Beruf. Lieber Sorge ich dafür, daß die Leute Tran und Fische und Felle, Kleider und Wein erhalten. Und wenn ich wieder daheim bin, dann baue ich den Hanekamphof mir ein wenig zurecht, bringe eine junge Frau dahin und freue mich des Friedens! Denn immer Mord und Totschlag und Belagerung und was noch alles zum Elend des Krieges gehört, das nenne ich kein Leben! (LK, p. 186)

In the same vein, while Burga's husband "Herr von Buchwald" (LK, p. 188) finds that "immer Frieden, das wäre nicht nach meinem Geschmack" (LK, p. 186), the aristocracy are poetically brought to account for their warrior temperament: "Obrist von Rantzau", Burga's brother, dies "im Kampfe gegen die Schweden einen tapfern Soldatentod" (LK, p. 187), while Buchwald "wurde nie wieder ganz gesund" and was neither able to hunt, nor to engage the enemy in consequence of being wounded in battle (LK, p. 188). Despite an ostensible degree of glamour, attached to the warrior life, and the crucially important value of independence, encapsulated in Buchwald's comment that "rauh ist das Leben hier und wenig Vergnügen. Dafür aber sitzen wir auf unsrer eignen Burg, und niemand hat uns was zu sagen" (LK, p. 171), the self-limiting aspect of the aristocrat's proximity to military pursuit is therefore juxtaposed with the viability of the merchant's lifestyle and attitude. The fallacies of the latter, on the other hand, are also highlighted: they are portrayed in the self-importance, materialism and lack of empathy that initially characterises Jobst Hanekamp, in consequence of which he initially exploits or harms everyone he comes into contact with (cf. LK, pp. 9, 66-70, 74-7, 96-8). *Das Lagerkind*, although a historical novel, here manages through its judicious emphasis on values and temperamental propensities to level observations that were pertinent to late *Kaiserreich* society. Arguably, however, this attribute of transferability come fully to bear in its sub-texts, rather than in its overt social critique.

As has been seen, at face value, *Das Lagerkind* does not operate as a pacifistic narrative, although even at this level a marked degree of ambivalence is readily apparent. While the temporal and spatial scope of *Das Lagerkind* in itself indicates generic hybridisation, as previously highlighted, it is the choice of narrative viewpoint that serves as a pointer to the novel's first, allegorical, sub-text. The Thirty Years' War

is well documented to have been fought out largely across German territories, with devastating effects.<sup>49</sup> Due to the use of the “wolf-strategy”,<sup>50</sup> the “losses of the civil population were almost incredible,” as Samuel Gardiner notes. He presents as case study a district in Thuringia:

there were, before the war cloud burst, 1,717 houses standing in nineteen villages. In 1649, only 627 houses were left. And even of the houses which remained many were untenanted. The 1,717 houses had been inhabited by 1,773 families. Only 316 families could be found to occupy the 627 houses.<sup>51</sup>

According to a more recent study, Germany,

after [the peace of] Westphalia [it] lay desolate. The population had fallen from 21 million to perhaps 13 million. Between a third and a half of the people were dead. Whole cities, like Magdeburg, stood in ruins. Whole districts lay stripped of their inhabitants, their livestock, their supplies.<sup>52</sup>

When the generally acknowledged existence of right-wing appropriations of *Heimatkunst* texts is considered alongside the subject matter and publication year of *Das Lagerkind*, the narrative might be suspected of, possibly concealed, propagandist purposes. Had it presented an – after all historically justifiable – portrayal of German territories as ravaged and suffering, it might have served as an emotive allegory, both in the capacity of educational tool and as *Lektüre* across the social strata. As previously alluded to, however, narrative purpose conspires to the opposite effect. The main protagonist Burga is of Danish, not of German origin, and ravaged Danish settings outweigh those of Germany. The military antagonists who impact on the area encompass the Habsburg troops, mostly referred to as “die Kaiserlichen” (LK, pp. 7,

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<sup>49</sup> Sigfrid Steinbeck's view, first published in 1966, that the “wars of the seventeenth century” were no more “physically destructive or morally degrading in their effects than other wars before or since” (Steinbeck, *The Thirty Years War*, p. 2.) is here regarded as suspect, since it conspires in import to belittle both contingency and import of this conflict. In this respect, I have found other studies, both of the nineteenth century and late twentieth century, more convincing.

<sup>50</sup> The Encyclopaedia Britannica is one of the sources which use this term. It is here elucidated as follows: “The principal battlefield for all these intermittent conflicts was the towns and principalities of Germany, which suffered severely. During the Thirty Years' War, many of the contending armies were mercenaries, many of whom could not collect their pay. This threw them on the countryside for their supplies, and thus began the “wolf-strategy” that typified this war. The armies of both sides plundered as they marched, leaving cities, towns, villages, and farms ravaged.” (Cf. “Thirty Years' War”, in: *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Online version: <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/592619/Thirty-Years-War>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.)

<sup>51</sup> Gardiner, *The Thirty Years' War 1618-1648*, pp. 213-4.

<sup>52</sup> Norman Davies. *Europe. A History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 568.

45),<sup>53</sup> “Schweden” (LK, pp. 49, 53, 62), “Brandenburger” (LK, pp. 179, 185) “Dragoner” (LK, p. 48, 100, 103) and “Polen” (LK, pp. 181, 183). The life of “Lagerkind” Burga proceeds in a life context of necessity without loyalty:

Manchmal ging so ein Troß von den Kaiserlichen zu den Schweden über, oder auch umgekehrt. Sie machten es so wie die Soldaten, die auch oft ihre Dienste wechselten. Denn allmählich wußte der gewöhnliche Mann wirklich nicht mehr, weshalb eigentlich dieser Krieg geführt wurde und die Machthaber, die in Stockholm, in Wien und Paris saßen, dachten nur darüber nach, wie sie den größten Vorteil aus allem schlagen konnten. Über diesem Nachdenken verging die Zeit, und das Elend wurde immer größer. (LK, p. 8)

The socio-historical focus of the novel, and this passage in particular, presents a veiled, yet emphatic narratorial warning at the time of publication, the eve of the first world war. At a moment of intense nationalistic fervour and propaganda, directly formulated social critique is unlikely to have found a sympathetic ear. Aside from Wilhelmine gender politics, which, as has already been shown, seriously impaired the reception of female authors, the limits of social critique *per se* are also clearly indicated by the publication history of Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan*. The choice of genre in the case of *Das Lagerkind* therefore becomes significant for its very capacity to incorporate resistant practice. The narrative portrayal of a historically distant conflict overtly signals a discreet, unrelated subject for educational purposes. At the same time, the focus on adventure within a feudal society that includes “Leibeigene” (LK, p. 167) signals that the narrative purpose is to provide *Unterhaltung*, as well as the absence of unduly challenging conceptual content. Yet at the same time the narrative trajectory, a depiction of an interminable series of violent conflicts that prove to be universally degrading, runs directly counter to the euphoric contemporaneous anticipation of swift victory, and all but prophetically warns against engagement in the impending conflict.

The narrative's focus on regionally-specific war contexts proceed at times vehemently, yet creates an overall depiction of war that is devoid of dignity and productive of widespread psychological and physical bestiality, which makes the idea of victory

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<sup>53</sup> On one occasion the Habsburgs appear in alliance with Northern German troops, where they are specified, respectively, as “Brandenburger” and “Österreicher” (LK, p. 179).

meaningless. Thus the religious aspect of the Thirty Years' War is referenced in episodes that portray the treatment of Protestant preachers at the hands of soldiers. Aside from references to ministers who had been murdered (cf. LK, pp. 22, 92), the "Magister Timotheus" appears as a prominent protagonist in the novel. He is usually referred to by his title to emphasise the learned status of Lutheran priests.<sup>54</sup> His own story is extreme:

Die kaiserlichen Truppen [hatten ihm] nicht allein Kirche und Pastorat verbrannt, sondern auch seine Frau und sein kleines Kind erstochen. Er selbst verteidigte seine kleine Familie, bis er besinnungslos und schwer verwundet niederstürzte. (LK, p. 45)

Found and nursed by a local "Bäuerin, die etwas von der Heilkunde verstand" (LK, p. 46), he is saved, but "hatte [...] eigentlich keine Lust mehr zu leben" (LK, p. 57) and is maimed: "Die Soldaten hatten ihm nicht allein die linke Hand abgeschlagen, sondern ihm auch ein ekles Wasser, das man den Schwedentrunk nannte, in den Hals gegossen" (LK, p. 46), which has permanently corroded his vocal tract. A noteworthy intertextual reference here is of course the well-known seventeenth-century picaresque narrative *Simplicissimus*, which also refers to this torture method:

Den knecht legten sie gebunden auf die erde, steckten ihm ein sperrholz ins maul und schütteten ihm einen melkkübel voll garstig mistlachenwaßer ins leibe, das nanten sie einen schwedischen trunk [*sic.*][...].<sup>55</sup>

The *mutually* degrading effects of war are again emphasised by the fact that this practice, originally attributed to Swedish soldiers, is in *Das Lagerkind* perpetrated by

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<sup>54</sup> During the reign of Christian IV (1596-1648), the official religion in Denmark was Lutheran. The existence of Calvinist preachers is therefore deemed to have been rare. The Lutheran denominational basis is here further taken from context: references to the behaviour of "boshafte Kinder [...] die Feuer ansteckten und unschuldige Tiere quälten" for instance, is contingent on their prior experience of atrocities against them, on account of which they "[schiene]n kein Gefühl zu haben". Virtue and vice are in the narrative context emphatically attributed to environmental, not to innate propensities that might indicate the psychological manifestations of 'original sin'. Similarly, akin to *Gottes Wege*, *Das Lagerkind* advocates spiritual practices such as active compassion and forgiveness, which run counter to Calvinist ideas, like 'total depravity' and 'unconditional election'. (Cf. for instance, Matthew J. Slick. "The Five Points of Calvinism", in: *The Calvinist Corner*. <<http://www.calvinistcorner.com/tulip.htm>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.)

<sup>55</sup> Hans Jakob Christoph von Grimmelshausen. *Der abenteuerliche Simplicissimus. Versuch einer Ausgabe nach den vier ältesten Drucken* (Dr. W.L. Holland, ed.). Tübingen: H. Laupp, 1851, p. 11. – The text was originally published in 1668 by Johann Fillion. (Cf. for instance, <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/5248/1>>. Accessed 10 Sep 2013.) – Historical lexis corroborate the practice as "im Dreißigjährigen Krieg zuerst von schwedischen Soldaten verübte Folterung: dem Gemarterten wurde Jauche oder Ähnliches gewaltsam eingefloßt." (Cf. for instance, "Schwedentrunk", in: <[http://universal\\_lexikon.deacademic.com/298477/Schwedentrunk](http://universal_lexikon.deacademic.com/298477/Schwedentrunk)>. Accessed 10 Sep 2013.)



Austrian troops. Further, the preacher is not only abused at the hands of Catholic fighters – a Danish “Wachtmeister” (LK, p. 49), who finds him in contemplation in the woods, first humiliates, and then attempts to kill him (cf. LK, p. 50). From a secular point of view, the blurring of boundaries between friend and foe and brutalising effects of war are specified when Hamburg merchant Jobst Hanekamp brings acts of plundering and kidnapping by indigeous soldiers to the attention of their “Obrist”, who, though unlike other commanders not devoid of humanity, is indifferent to “Ungerechtigkeit” because in war “geht mancherlei drunter und drüber” (LK, p. 104).

The already established impression of interminability of conflict is strengthened by a particularly vehement colloquial view of renewed hostilities, when “gerade, wie das Land einigermaßen ruhig war und die Felder bestellt werden konnten, da begann wieder der Krieg”:

Der dänische König ward hart von den Schweden bedrängt, die vom Süden her in Schleswig-Holstein einbrachen und große Verwüstungen anrichteten. Bis die Brandenburger und Österreicher zu Hilfe kamen. Der Große Kurfürst ist damals selbst bis nach Flensburg geritten [...] leider hatte er auch Polen unter seiner Fahne, die wie die Wilden in Städte und Dörfer einbrachen, dort mordeten und raubten, daß sie überall Entsetzen verbreiteten. Der Polackenkrieg, wie er genannt wurde, brachte noch mehr Elend nach Schleswig als der Dreißigjährige Krieg, und ganze Dörfer und Höfe verschwanden vom Erdboden, um niemals wieder aufzuerstehen. (LK, p. 179)

Ulrich Lange provides what appears to be rare corroboration of the regional specificity of this passage, which in outline concurs with generally acknowledged military developments.<sup>56</sup> According to Lange, in 1658,

österreichische, brandenburgische und polnische Truppen lagen als ‘Verbündete’ im Land und ernährten sich auch daraus. Die Folgen [...] waren trotzdem

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<sup>56</sup> According to Steinbeck, in 1643, the Swedish commander Torstenson “was ordered to break off his victorious campaign in Moravia and to turn against Denmark. Within a few weeks his troops covered about 500 miles, overran Schleswig-Holstein and marched into Jutland. At the same time Horn [...] invaded the Danish provinces in southern and western Sweden. A fleet was chartered in Holland, which cleared the Baltic and facilitated the capture of the isolated Danish islands of Gotland and Oesel. An imperialist army under Gallas was ordered to relieve the Danes.” While Sweden still remained dominant at this point, the extent of Swedish gains over the following five years “brought about an anti-Swedish alliance of Austria, Poland, Brandenburg and the Netherlands.” (Steinbeck, *The Thirty Years War*, pp. 75, 89.) This alliance is the point of reference in *Das Lagerkind*.

verheerend. Nach dem polnischen Kontingent wurde die Zeit später im Volksmund oft als "Polackenkrieg" bezeichnet.<sup>57</sup>

The accusation levelled at the Polish contingent adds an impression of a particularly brutal phase of war, which also impacts on the main protagonists when an unexpected attack almost kills Walburg's husband, the "Ritter Buchwald" (cf. LK, p. 181). Yet the comparative adjectival construction used to elevate import, here as elsewhere, does not establish the intended intensification of censure to any marked extent. References to both cruelty and destruction are overall sufficiently unsparing to posit their import semantically in absolute, rather than in relative terms. A further example of syntactical efforts at relativisation and elevation occurs when, again in the light of the presence of Polish troops, "Frau Burga freute sich, daß die Finkenburg nicht wieder aufgebaut war. Sie würde vielleicht ein noch schlimmeres Schicksal erlitten haben als ehemals" (LK, p. 180). A previously narrated visit to the ruin, however, had revealed "einen Steinhaufen [...] dichter Efeu wuchs in den Mauerlöchern, und wo einst ein zierliches Gärtchen gewesen war, lagen Berge von Mörtel und Kalk" (LK, p.170). The vehemence of regional memory therefore adds emotive, rather than semantic effect and does not conspire to detract from the overall allegorical impact of the narrative, which constructs an anti-war discourse.

Unlike the narrative's anti-war import, which, although veiled is also confrontational and readily apprehendable, this sub-text is conceptually peripheral and provides an example of the ways in which narrative can construct a multiplicity of viewpoints that are not mutually exclusive. The overall theme which will be taken up in this respect is the novel's portrayal of problematic relationships to nature, which accompany the barbarism, physical and psychological, engendered by the war. Stylistically, a hint of animism is constellated in occasional personifications of natural imagery, as has

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<sup>57</sup> Ulrich Lange (ed.). "Dänisch-Schwedischer Krieg", in: *Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins - Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*. Wachholtz: Neumünster, 1996. Online version: <<http://www.geschichte-s-h.de/vonabisz/daenischschwedischerkrieg.htm>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013. - A concerted search for historical corroboration of the behaviour of Polish troops in this conflict yielded few results – among these, Lange's, though itself oblique, was the most notable. The term "Polackenkrieg" as an aspect of local memory on account of effects that were "verheerend" despite the ostensible status of Polish troops as "Verbündete" seems ominous.

already been highlighted. This attitude is developed further in an episode in which the Magister Timotheus contemplates nature's amorality after preventing a fox from catching a hare by throwing his walking stick to upset the former's pursuit:

Der Hase war gerettet, aber wie lange? Als der Magister seinen Stock wieder holte, seufzte er, weil er an die armen schwachen Tiere des Waldes denken mußte, die die Beute der Stärkeren wurden. Und dann dachte er an den Fuchsbau, den er grade neulich mitten im Walde gefunden hatte. Vor ihm saßen die kleinen Füchse, spielten miteinander und warteten auf die Mutter, die ihnen etwas zu fressen bringen sollte. [...] Eigentlich mußte man die Tiere alle gewähren lassen. Sie hatten es wahrlich auch nicht leicht, sich durchzubringen. (LK, pp. 47-8)

His acceptance of nature's savagery in terms of survival and, implicitly, of balance contrasts sharply with the effect produced when humans become predatory. Thus the Danish "Wachtmeister" who attempts to kill Timotheus for showing insufficient respect for soldiers (LK, pp. 49-50) subsequently accuses Burga of witchcraft (LK, p. 88) for sitting in a military boat with a "Höllenhund" (LK, p. 87):

Ich [...] glaube, daß du eine Hexe bist und daß dieser Hund der leibhaftige Teufel ist! Marsch!" Noch einmal packte der Wachtmeister das Mädchen, um dann gleich einen wilden Fluch auszustoßen. Denn der Höllenhund [...] legte seine mächtigen Pranken dem Dragoner auf die Schultern, daß dieser fast zusammenknickte. Aber er verlor nicht die Besinnung. "Nimm das Tier weg!" sagte er halblaut. "Sonst renne ich ihm mein Messer in den Leib!" "Versucht es!" Burga rief es trotzig, und wie der Wachtmeister eine Bewegung nach seinem Gürtel machte, da hätten die spitzen Zähne des Hundes beinahe zugebissen. Burga hinderte das Tier daran. Sie hielt ihm das Maul zu und flüsterte einige beruhigende Worte. Da ließ Wolf von dem Wachtmeister und stand zähnefletschend neben seiner Herrin. Der Wachtmeister aber fluchte, daß alle Soldaten zusammenliefen: "Jungen, nehmt eure Karbiner und schießt das Biest tot! Und wenn die Dirn eine Kugel trifft, wirts auch nicht schaden!" (LK, p. 88)

It is not survival that motivates his impetus to kill, but superstition on the one hand, and the wish for domination on the other. The reference to superstition provides one of the novel's several references the witch-hunts, which "in their most disastrous form [...] lasted until shortly after the end of the Thirty Years' War in 1648."<sup>58</sup> Although witch hunts had begun as a Catholic phenomenon, and have frequently been attributed to the Catholic Reformation because the most ruthless persecutions had taken place in "regions where the Catholic church was weakest",<sup>59</sup> *Das Lagerkind* alludes to a

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<sup>58</sup> Nachman Ben-Yehuda. "The European Witch Craze of the 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries: A Sociologist's Perspective", in: *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 86, No. 1 (Jul 1980), p. 6.

<sup>59</sup> Ben-Yehuda, "The European Witch Craze", p. 6. – Quoting Herbert Pohl, William Bradforth Smith contests interpretations of witch hunts as "accompanying phenomenon of the Confessional era", since "in

regionally specific Protestant variant.<sup>60</sup> William Burns observes that “Denmark was the most active witch-hunting society in Scandinavia” although “large-scale witch-hunts did not develop there”, to concur with the overall portrayal of *Das Lagerkind*, where the phenomenon appears as incidental and insidious, rather than as systematic. He notes that in Denmark as elsewhere, “about 90 percent of the victims were women”<sup>61</sup> and the novel mounts a wry commentary in Burga’s incredulity when faced with vernacular belief in “Hexen” and “Zauberer”: she “lachte laut. ‘Die armen Frauen!’” (LK, p. 36)

Burns further draws attention to the existence of “Denmark’s leading demonologist, the Lutheran theologian Niels Hemmingsen (1513-1600)”, who promulgated the idea of sorcery and “satanic pact” in his writings, which became the sole criterion for the death penalty in the new witchcraft law of 1617. Notably, “the Devil, or demons, usually appeared in the testimony of accused witches not as the lordly master of the sabbat, but as a large black dog”.<sup>62</sup> The novel’s lupine and canine leitmotifs therefore are striking in their cultural and historical referentiality.. The second characteristic of human predatoriness exemplified in the “Wachtmeister”, the desire for power, is first established in his meeting with Timotheus in the forest:

“Ich bin der königlich dänische Wachtmeister Balthasar und jeder, der mir begegnet, muß mir gehorchen!” sagte er drohend, während Timotheus seinen Hut wieder aufsetzte. “Was wünscht ihr denn?” erkundigte er sich, und Balthasar sah ihn unzufrieden an. “Weshalb setzest du deinen Hut wieder auf, wenn du von mir

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all the communities where witches were brought to trial in the Electorate of Mainz, the Catholic Reformation had either ended or had not yet begun.” He acknowledges the existence of high-profile witch-hunter Friedrich Förner’s views, according to which “witches would only appear when and where all other forms of heresy had failed. Their presence was proof positive of the success of Catholic reform efforts” and that “the witch hunts marked the culmination of the battle against the Protestant heresy and the threshold of the complete restoration of the faith.” (William Bradforth Smith. “Friedrich Förner, the Catholic Reformation, and Witch-hunting in Bamberg”, in: *The Sixteenth Century Journal*. Vol. 36, No. 1 (Spring 2005), pp. 127-8.) Ben-Yehuda dates its beginnings: “Until the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Catholic church’s official policy regarding witchcraft was summarized in the *Canon episcopi* [...] which regarded belief in witchcraft as mere illusion. The Inquisition was founded in the 13<sup>th</sup> century in order to combat the deliberate, continued, and public denial of the church’s doctrine by baptized Christians” (Ben-Yehuda, “The European Witch Craze”, p. 8). He notes further that “although individual, scattered trials of witches had already been carried out in 1245 and 1275 [...] the early decades of the 14<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a tremendous intensification of attempts to stifle witchcraft practices” (Ben-Yehuda, “The European Witch Craze”, p. 4). According to Monter, between 1450 and 1750, “European witchcraft [...] was conceived of as a virulent and dangerous blend of sorcery and heresy.” (Edward William Monter. *European Witchcraft*. New York: Wiley, 1969, p. vii.)

<sup>60</sup> Ben-Yehuda notes that generally, “Protestants persecuted witches with almost the same zeal as the Catholics, despite many objective differences between them.” (Ben-Yehuda, “The European Witch Craze”, p. 15.)

<sup>61</sup> William E. Burns. *Witch Hunts in Europe and America: An Encyclopedia*. Westport/London: Greenwood Press, 2003, p. 64.

<sup>62</sup> Burns, *Witch Hunts*, p. 65.

angeredet wirst, das schickt sich nicht!“ “Weshalb nennt Ihr mich du, wo ich doch die Höflichkeit bewahre und Euch nicht dutze?“ erkundigte sich der Magister, worauf der Wachtmeister rot im Gesicht wurde. “Weil mir das so paßt, mein Freund Wir Soldaten sind hier die Herren, und kein Schwarzrock hat uns was zu sagen! [...]” (LK, p. 49)

Balthasar’s identification with the army, and consequent self-aggrandisement, beyond constituting a nodding glance at a distasteful characteristic of Wilhelmine society, as described by Ullrich and Elias, highlights the Wachtmeister’s disrespect for religion, to connote his superstitious sentiment as particularly irrational and suspect, because it starkly reveals his desire to dominate. The linguistic manipulation used in his direct speech to impel the soldiers to execute Burga is here noteworthy. He initially addresses them paternistically, as “Jungen”, semantically to underline kinship, thereby implicitly to emphasise the loyalty and obedience owed to him. Their weapons, likewise, are not anonymous but “Karbiner”, the proper noun here connoting the firearm in terms of a trusted tool. By contrast, Burga and her dog are designated “Dirn” and “Biest”, which connotes both of them in terms of denigration and anonymity to make their murder emotionally viable.<sup>63</sup> The existence of psychological machination behind the potential of atrocity is here therefore keenly observed. When an “Obrist” suddenly appears to intercept the execution, he is sufficiently struck by the dog as a “gutes Tier” to appropriate him for himself. Balthasar’s designation of “Höllenhund” and “leibhaftige[r] Teufel” (LK, pp. 87, 88) is thereby highlighted as a psycho-pathological construction. The phenomenon of witch-hunting is here – as elsewhere (cf. LK, pp. 36, 108) – implicitly deconstructed in terms of what has already been discussed as shadow projection. This depth-psychological viewpoint is partially acknowledged in Ben-Yehuda’s sociological perspective, according to which witch-hunts characteristically manifested

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<sup>63</sup> This is not to imply that “Dirn” in the seventeenth century is identical with associations attached to “Dirne” since the nineteenth century. In *Das Lagerkind*, “Dirn” simply denotes ‘common girl’. It is the dismissiveness of this term, respecting a non-descript, disposable person that is here referred to.

as the negative mirror image of the true faith. This made it possible to attribute all the undesirable phenomena associated with the anomie of the age to the conspiracy of Satan and the witches against Christianity.<sup>64</sup>

It is apparent that there is, in *Das Lagerkind*, strong implicit resistance to the contemporaneous naturalistic discourse based in evolutionary theory. Then ascendant across European and American societies, this discourse projected the amoral savagery of nature, in itself characterised by the equilibrium of mutually contingent eco-systems, to human society in various, deeply problematic ways.<sup>65</sup> Predatory human action, however, is in this novel designated as *immorality* rather than *amorality* due to its effects: it does not conspire towards balance, but causes large-scale devastation and imbalance while motivated by the quest for power as domination. In addition, as psychological phenomenon, it is portrayed as attended by pathological irrationality.

The positive values set against the damning wider cultural scenario of *Das Lagerkind* are specific spiritual-moral tenets on the one hand, and indigenous relationships to nature on the other. The former are portrayed as acting restoratively in the presence of potential psychological breakdown. The danger of this possibility is hinted when Burga loses the ability to cry (LK, p. 22) and in her diffidence about “Tod und Sterben” (LK, p. 31), which occur in an already established context of “boshafte Kinder [...] die kein Gefühl zu haben schienen” (LK, p. 14). The psychologically protective attributes of roaming “Magister” among the “Troß” are amplified in her emphatic specification of these mentors as “gut”, in contradistinction to the norm of her experience<sup>66</sup> – they therefore act as an alternative model of behaviour. As already mentioned, the spiritual tenets here advocated are compassion and forgiveness, akin to *Gottes Wege*. Their function includes the amelioration of atrocity, as seen, for instance, when Timotheus

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<sup>64</sup> Ben-Yehuda, “The European Witch Craze”, p. 15.

<sup>65</sup> For further discussion of this discourse, also termed Social Darwinism, cf. “Social Transformation in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*” p. 262, footnote 81; cf. also “Individuality and Gender in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*”, p. 282, footnote 19, p. 297, footnote 58 and p. 310, footnote 87.

<sup>66</sup> The picaresque novel *Simplicissimus* provides a further inter-textual reference point, since its protagonist is also saved from moral degradation in childhood by a spiritual man, in this case a hermit early on in the narrative. (Cf. Hans Jakob Christoph von Grimmelshausen. *Der abenteuerliche Simplicissimus. Versuch einer Ausgabe nach den vier ältesten Drucken* (Dr. W.L. Holland, ed.). Tübingen: H. Laupp, 1851, Chapter 7.)

effects the rescue of Balthasar when the latter is left to die by Swedish soldiers soon after he had attempted to shoot the preacher (cf. LK, pp. 58-61). In tandem with another wise old woman, his “Muhme”, Timotheus acknowledges that “wir müssen ihm doch die Barmherzigkeit erweisen” (LK, p. 62) even though he concludes that “er taugt nicht viel” (LK, p. 61), to maintain the sense of the Wachtmeister’s humanity, rather than labelling him evil on account of his actions and motivations. The simplicity of these spiritual tenets are therefore portrayed as contributing to an inner resilience that enables interaction with extreme situations without in turn succumbing, or conforming, to conceptual or emotional extremes.

Significantly, it is not only spiritual faith, but also indigenous relationships to nature that constellate resourceful responses to oppressive or atrocious imposed norms. The scenario that is initially conspicuous in this respect is that of locals who constellate an unseen, tenuous yet viable network capable of providing incidental mutual help, co-operation and protection. This network appears in protagonists who share secret locations (cf. LK, p. 52), assist each other (LK, pp. 80-1) and refuse to give information to soldiers (LK, p. 49), in fishermen capable of signalling to each other across distances and in locals able to read natural signs (cf. LK, pp. 47, 53), failure of which proves fatal to marauding Swedish soldiers (cf. LK, pp. 53, 55, 63). Significantly, it appears further in allusions to women who practise the healing arts, such as the Bäuerin mentioned previously, to assert herbalism or “Heilkunde” as a beneficial indigenous phenomenon, rather than as a “von [...] Kräuterfrauen betriebene schwarze Kunst”.<sup>67</sup> An important misogynistic aspect of theologically-based beliefs about witches is therefore subtly refuted.

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<sup>67</sup> Walter Rummel. “Die ‘Ausrottung des abscheulichen Hexerey Lasters’. Zur Bedeutung populärer Religiosität in einer dörflichen Hexenverfolgung des 17. Jahrhunderts”, in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft. Sonderheft. Volksreligiosität in der modernen Sozialgeschichte*. Vol. 11, (1986), p. 58. – Rummel’s study focuses on the “Verfolgungsbereitschaft der Bevölkerung”, which proceeded on the one hand on the basis of an ambivalent “volkstümliche Vorstellung in der ‘Zauberin’ and dem ‘Zauberer’ [...] die ihre magische Wirkung allein mittels eines kunstfertig gehandhabten Formelschatzes und ihres persönlichen Charismas erzielten und daher sowohl böswillige als auch wohlwollende Magie betreiben konnten”, in

The most consistent form of this type of resistance, however, appears in Burga's relationship to "Wolf", who, along with his "Namensvettern" (LK, p. 22), wild wolves, forms a dual leitmotif in this novel. Burga is portrayed as having an inexplicable bond with her canine companion, who is entirely loyal to her. She acts as 'dog whisperer', who "sagte ihm einige leise Worte, und da legte er sich zu ihren Füßen hin" (LK, p. 41) or who "flüsterte ihrem Hunde etwas ins Ohr. Da verlor sich seine wilde Miene, er wedelte ein wenig und schloß das Maul mit den großen Zähnen" (LK, p. 89). In this way, she is able to communicate commands such as when to attack and not to attack, when to show acceptance and when to remain silent in the presence of danger (cf. LK, pp. 21, 87-8, 89, 107, 156, 160). Their bond is therefore constellated as a quasi-magical element which indicates her closeness to nature and to the instinctual world. At the same time, however, deep-rooted cultural assumptions about an associated "Schadensnatur",<sup>68</sup> an echo of which persisted into the late nineteenth century,<sup>69</sup> are negated. A comparison between wild wolves and Burga's companion sheds light on the symbolic content of this leitmotif. Wolves appear as implacable, almost prescient pack hunters. When Burga and Wolf the dog find refuge in a hut upon hearing their cry in the distance, she adjures,

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contradistinction to the demonising premise of theologians. On the other hand, he notes the locally-based psychological basis: "In den [...] berichteten Anklagen und Zeugenaussagen ist freilich von 'Hexerei' kaum noch die Rede, dafür umso mehr von dem schlechten Ruf der Beklagten, von ihrem haltlosen Charakter und ihrer auffallenden Gemütsverfassung." The terms of local scapegoating are therefore identifiably anti-individual and manifest as attempts to enforce behaviour norms, rather than religious prerogatives *per se*. (Rummel, "Die 'Ausrottung'", pp. 51, 59.) The theme of anti-individualistic, herd-like behaviours figures strongly as a critique of rural communities in *Gottes Wege*. It appears also in *Das Lagerkind*, albeit in reference to the collective fascination with and contribution to the public humiliation and execution of criminals by the citizens of Hamburg (cf. LK, pp. 126-8), which Burga finds distasteful. Allusions to vernacular sentiments about witchcraft are here not similarly collectivised, since they appear in isolated individuals.

<sup>68</sup> Rummel, "Die 'Ausrottung'", p. 57.

<sup>69</sup> The thematics of objective evil appears also in the autobiographical sketch "Großvaters Schreiber", in the character Mamsell Hausen, who "hatte eine Leidenschaft für Menschen, die böse Finger oder die Rose hatten; dann verband oder 'besprach' sie das kranke Glied". This character, whose normality and kindness are conspicuously emphasised in this narrative, is deemed as "ein wenig übergeshnappt" on account of her partiality for nudity (Charlotte Niese. "Großvater Schreiber", in: *Aus dänischer Zeit*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1903, p. 85), and seen overall as a somewhat incomprehensible *other*. While further cultural contexts also impact on the narratorial viewpoint, such as the scientific discourse about medicine and Wilhelmine prudery, it is nevertheless conspicuous that a residual element of magic remains – sufferers with an 'evil finger' would be 'adjured' – emphasis on the Mamsell's goodness (Niese, "Großvaters Schreiber", p. 86) resonates with the older context, while references concerned with madness and normality rather echo Wilhelmine normative propensities.



“Still, still! Sie brauchen nicht zu wissen, daß wir hier sind!” Aber sie wußten es schon lange. Zwei graue Wölfe saßen unter der Hütte, und es war, als käme ihr heißer Atem durch die Ritzen. (LK, p. 23)

The chief differences between wolves and other wild animals in *Das Lagerkind* are that the former “überfielen Wanderer” (LK, p. 156) at a time when countless people are homeless and vulnerable. Their frequent occurrence in folk literature, where they appear as a symbolic embodiment of evil, acts as a subliminal association which lends potency to the image of stealthy, persistent and indiscriminate opportunist hunters who are devastating in their effects. Thus they are symbolically aligned with the predatory humans of the novel, including “Räuber”, who likewise “trieben sich [im anstoßenden Walde] umher” (LK, p. 35), and, of course, the marauding soldiers of differing nationalities. Attributes of the at times anthropomorphised dog (cf. LK, pp. 107, 175) are his bravery, derived from his *semi*-wildness which in turn is characterised by his capacity for relationship and amenability to direction, his elevated cognisance and unwavering loyalty, as well as devotion. By contrast, the unalloyed instinct of the wolves serves solely the interests of their own species – there is even a peripheral allegorical allusion to individualism when two wolves lie in wait for Burga beneath her temporary place of refuge in the forest:

Sie scharren an den Stämmen, auf dem das leichte Gebäude ruhte, und sie heulten und bellten. Ein dritter kam dazu: da gab es eine Beißerei. Dann aber schienen sie sich wieder zu vertragen und saßen ganz still, als warteten sie. (LK, p. 23)

In contrast to such inscrutable wild interactions, the dog represents instinctive nature, ennobled partly because it is capable of restraint and partly because it finds fulfilment in serving others. The human counterpart of the wild demeanour of wolves is in this novel highlighted as impetuosity, a trait that is censured mainly in soldiers.<sup>70</sup> When the “Obrist” prevents Burga’s summary execution, for instance, he reprimands the Wachtmeister: “ein alter Grimmbart, wie du, sollte sich nicht vom Zorn meistern

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<sup>70</sup> It is also implicitly attributed to Jobst Hanekamp, when he insists on summoning soldiers for his own safe return to Hamburg from his relatives’ smallholding in the Holstein forest, a circumstance that leads to the property being plundered, the elder son being kidnapped and Jutta and her younger son’s continued existence there being unviable (cf. LK, pp. 96-9). Impetuosity therefore also has a devastating effect from the civilian perspective, though is most frequently identified with soldiers.

lassen!" (LK, p. 89) Similarly, a "Rittmeister" who wants to attack Timotheus for complaining to the same Obrist about his and Burga's needless imprisonment and the confiscation of her dog, is negatively described and an alternative model is posited:

Rittmeister Brockdorf, der immer ein wenig vorwitzig war, griff nach dem Degen. Denn wenn er sich ärgerte, wollte er immer gleich losschlagen. Aber der Obrist hob die Hand. "Rittmeister, ärgert Euch nicht; ich tu's auch nicht." (LK, p. 107)

Responsive to the Magister's reprimand, the Obrist returns the dog to Burga and thus acknowledges his injustice. This advocacy of restraint is a significant commentary that is highly relevant to the socio-political circumstances of the late *Kaiserreich*. It emerges most clearly as transcendent critique from the parodic import of the officer's wish "gleich los[zu]schlagen" when annoyed: an, infantile, obviously unviable attribute in a social setting, it becomes atrocious in a military one. In terms of the novel's deepest sub-text, which posits the existence of "Menschen, die schlimmer sind als ein wirkliches Schwein" (LK, p. 36), in other words, have less dignity than an animal on account of living according to their basest instincts, the symbiotic relationship between child and dog contributes to an alternative, idealistic vision for human stature. Remarkably for the Wilhelmine era, human dignity is not envisaged in terms of repressed instincts – in this sense, puritanical moralistic notions are refuted. Instead, it appears in terms of an instinctually vigorous nature that is also capable of self-control and which, further, is orientated in living "nicht allein für sich, sondern für andere" (LK, p. 171). Agnes Harder's estimation, referred to earlier, that novels in the "Mainzer" series contain "noch jenen Idealismus [...], den wir mit Bangen in unserem Vaterlande schwinden sehen", is therefore realised in *Das Lagerkind*, though probably in more subversive ways than that envisaged by cursory readings of these "Volks- und Jugendbücher".

The narrative time of *Licht und Schatten*<sup>71</sup> is 1892, just three years earlier than its publication date; its setting is Hamburg. That its reception is an unreliable guide to this novel's stature has already been highlighted. Kammerhof attributes this narrative to *Heimatliteratur* because "durch den Roman geht ein einheitlicher Zug, der Grundgedanke der Heimatkunst."<sup>72</sup> He justifies this ambiguous statement on the grounds that "Stadt und Land stehen einander gegenüber", and that two protagonists, an urban citizen and a rural peasant, both express "Heimatliebe". Leaving aside for the moment both the accuracy and problematics of the statement as an essential characterisation of this narrative, a breach of generally acknowledged narrative boundaries already becomes apparent. The novel is set in a city; an attitude of affection for, and loyalty towards, home appears equally from an urban and rural standpoint. Its subject matter in turn transcends regional, or, for that matter, national interest: the last great Cholera epidemic that afflicted the city, which killed 8,600 people, is the event around which the multiple narrative strands of *Licht und Schatten* revolve. Friedrich Castelle, like Kammerhof, designates the novel a "Hamburger Zeitroman". To him, it presents

die bedeutendste dichterische Darstellung des bekannten Hamburger Cholerajahres, und etwas von dem tiefen Schrecken, der damals die ganze Menschheit durchzuckte, zittert in diesem Buche nach.<sup>73</sup>

His synopsis of the plot emphasises its largely bourgeois focalisation of events:

Mit großem Geschick hat die Dichterin die ganze Handlung um die Familie des Großkaufmanns Bardenfleth gruppiert und diesen, dem in dem Wirrwarr der Choleraangst sein verkrüppeltes Töchterlein abhanden gekommen ist, zum tatkräftigen Führer der ganzen, freiwilligen Hilfstätigkeit gemacht. Auf diese Weise führt sie den Leser am sichersten mitten hinein in die Herde der Cholera und gibt in grausigen Schilderungen, vor allem von der Fahrt des Kaufmanns zu dem

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<sup>71</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Licht und Schatten*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1895. (Henceforth: LS)

<sup>72</sup> Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", p. 52.

<sup>73</sup> Castelle, *Charlotte Niese*, p. 21. Cf. also Kammerhof, "Charlotte Niese", p. 48.

Cholerahospital, die Erschütterung der ganzen großen Seestadt mit unheimlicher Anschaulichkeit und Eindringlichkeit wieder.<sup>74</sup>

This summary, although it includes pertinent points of the story and acknowledges literary stature, is too one-sided to be representative of the whole novel, the phrase “Herde der Cholera” additionally giving an impression of a markedly conservative social bias. Kammerhof, who slants his reading to prioritise the significance of the city-country contrast, recognises the narrative complexity of *Licht und Schatten* better: his synopsis acknowledges its plots to be discrete as well as contingent, and hence spans three pages.<sup>75</sup> The novel is usefully described in terms of its structure: it is a triple narrative, which shifts focus from milieu to milieu, largely chapter by chapter. A portrayal of Hamburg’s social composition, as three heterogeneous, yet hierarchically defined societal strata thereby emerges. These strata encompass the working class, a middle tier of *Angestellten*, and the *Bürgertum* proper. Each stratum is depicted in terms of specific positive and negative potentials from the outset – a distinct socially critical tone therefore emerges – but both potentials are pushed to extremes as the epidemic eventually places all protagonists in extreme physical and emotional circumstances. Contingencies between the strata are emphasised as events originating in one sphere impact on one or both of the other.

The structural composition of *Licht und Schatten* readily confirms Castelle and Kammerhof’s designation *Zeitroman*. This is not to say that the term is straightforward: the previously highlighted critical disparity about the literary stature of the novel demonstrates this to be gender-based, but undoubtedly, it also had its roots in issues pertaining to generic classification. The combination of regional narrative and *Zeitroman* complicates matters further, since the connotations of ‘regional’ are ‘particular’ and ‘specific’, while those of ‘time’, in this context, are ‘general’ and ‘representative’, or at least ‘characteristic’. Obfuscation of regional and national by *Heimatkunst* theoreticians in turn is of no help because it tends to constellate

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<sup>74</sup> Castelle, *Charlotte Niese*, p. 21.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Kammerhof, “Charlotte Niese”, pp. 48-50.

particularity and universality as a non-sensical amalgam. It is therefore worth evaluating *Licht und Schatten* in the light of a brief sketch of the recent historical development of the *Zeitroman* as a genre. Terminological issues have been highlighted in studies since the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>76</sup> Roger Hillman accepts the inevitability of some terminological porosity between “Gesellschaftsroman, Charakterroman und Entwicklungsroman”,<sup>77</sup> but contests the extent to which it is applied:

The issue seems to be one of emphasis, though not in the shadowy form of Majut's claim. A *Zeitroman* does portray society, it does include characters, though rarely with such primacy as to justify the term ‘Charakterroman’, and it can trace the development of the latter, but it need not, as in the static approach of [Theodor Fontane's] *Der Stechlin*. The capacity of the *Zeitroman* to integrate these and other elements without affecting the primacy of the *Zeit* is what establishes its most characteristic areas of tension and what also disqualifies it from being called a ‘Charakterroman’ or an ‘Entwicklungsroman’. It is far more difficult to separate the terms *Gesellschaftsroman* and *Zeitroman*. [...] The *Zeitroman* seems to encompass but at the same time go beyond the *Gesellschaftsroman*. In general its scope extends to the bases of a society in a particular age, and the span of contemporary issues and interrelationships between the social classes is wider, even when these are related back to one class as the focus of attention – the nobility in *Der Stechlin* and the upper-bourgeoisie in [Heinrich Mann's] *Im Schlaraffenland*.<sup>78</sup>

The historical development of the subordination of character development to the “primacy of the *Zeit*” is articulated by Gert Vonhoff in respect of works of Karl Gutzkow, in which “an die Stelle der Geschichte eines wie auch immer ironisch gebrochenen Einzelhelden [...] eine Vielzahl von Hauptfiguren [treten]”, from which “andere Figuren nur schwer abzugrenzen sind.”<sup>79</sup> Dirk Götsche relates this development to the latter part of the nineteenth century:

Neben der realistischen Mischform von Individual- und Gesellschaftsroman läßt sich in der Geschichte des realistischen Zeitromans seit den sechziger Jahren ein

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<sup>76</sup> Victor Klemperer's treatise on Friedrich Spielhagen is an early example. (Cf. Victor Klemperer. *Die Zeitromane Friedrich Spielhagens und ihre Wurzeln*. Weimar: A. Duncker, 1913, p. 111.) Peter Hasubek, Joachim Worthmann and Roger Hillman may here be mentioned as providing notable enquiries published in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, which focus in depth on what constitutes a *Zeitroman*. (Cf. Peter Hasubek. *Karl Gutzkows Romane Die Ritter vom Geiste und Der Zauberer von Rom: Studien zur Typologie des deutschen Zeitromans*. Dissertation: Hamburg, 1964; Peter Hasubek. “Der Zeitroman: Ein Romantypus des 19. Jahrhunderts”, in: *ZfDPh*, Vol. 87, No. 2 (May, 1968), pp. 219-45; Joachim Worthmann. *Probleme des Zeitromans: Studien zur Geschichte des deutschen Romans im 19. Jahrhundert*. Heidelberg: Winter, 1974; Roger Hillman. *Zeitroman. The Novel and Society in Germany 1830-1900*. Frankfurt/New York et.al.: Peter Lang, 1983.)

<sup>77</sup> Rudolf Majut, quoted in: Hillman, *Zeitroman*, pp. 14-5.

<sup>78</sup> Hillman, *Zeitroman*, pp.14-5.

<sup>79</sup> Gert Vonhoff. *Vom Bürgerlichen Individuum zur sozialen Frage. Romane von Karl Gutzkow*. Frankfurt/New York: Peter Lang, 1993, p. 251.

zweites Strukturmodell des Erzählens verfolgen, das auf der symbolischen Darstellung gesellschaftlicher Totalität mit Hilfe relativ gleichgewichtiger Konfigurationen beruht, auf das Entwicklungsschema des Bildungsroman verzichtet und auf diese Weise enger an Gutzkows 'Roman des Nebeneinander' anschließt [...].<sup>80</sup>

*Licht und Schatten* is accurately described in terms of "eine Vielzahl von Hauptfiguren" and of "gleichgewichtiger Konfigurationen", in spite of the "interrelationships between the social classes" being "related back to one class as the focus of attention" – here the Hamburg patriciate. The two ultimate priorities of the novel are early 1890s Hamburg society and the depiction of the epidemic. The regionalised *urban* portrayal is perhaps uniquely situated on the threshold of *Heimatkunst* and *Zeitroman*. In this respect, a striking point of similarity exists between Charlotte Niese's and Clara Viebig's narrative approaches: Caroline Bland highlights how "the genres of *Heimatkunst* [...] and the naturalistic *Großstadtroman*" come to be successfully combined in Viebig's work.<sup>81</sup> *Licht und Schatten*, which combines "impulses from both genres"<sup>82</sup> in a single narrative, however, precedes Viebig's *Das Weiberdorf* and *Das tägliche Brot*.<sup>83</sup> According to Hillman's exposition, Niese's novel is also a *Gesellschaftsroman*, because it is deeply concerned with the "bases of society" and "interrelationships between the social classes" at the point of burgeoning consumerism, particularly with its psychological, but also with its social and socio-political effects. The reading that follows will therefore initially focus on how *Licht und Schatten* constitutes Hamburg society and how it relates to historical actualities, in order to examine the novel's function and stature as *Zeitroman* and *Gesellschaftsroman*. A subsequent focus will be a juxtaposition of the novel's overt value formulations and sub-textual constructions.

*Licht und Schatten*, as previously alluded to, consecutively introduces protagonists who belong to the three posited social classes. The fact that the cholera is not mentioned

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<sup>80</sup> Dirk Götsche. *Zeit im Roman. Literarische Zeitreflexion und die Geschichte des Zeitromans im späten 18. und im 19. Jahrhundert*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2001, p. 714.

<sup>81</sup> Caroline Bland. "Clara Viebig: Using the Genres of *Heimatkunst* und *Großstadtroman* to Create Bestselling Novels", in: Charlotte Woodford/Benedict Schofield. *The German Bestseller in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Rochester/New York: Camden House, 2012, p. 78.

<sup>82</sup> Bland, "Clara Viebig", p. 78.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Clara Viebig. *Das Weiberdorf*. Berlin: Fontane, 1900; Clara Viebig. *Das tägliche Brot*. Berlin: Fontane, 1901.

until the ninth chapter (cf. LS, p. 143)<sup>84</sup> gives some indication of the extent of societal observation outside of this main narrative strand. The working class encompasses characters from diverse backgrounds: Tine Hauberg, an erstwhile domestic servant, is contrasted with a more modern, disrespectful and discontented type of domestic employee (cf. LS, pp. 20-1) to constellate a retroactive social vision. The Rüppell family, in which the father, a dockworker, is a violent alcoholic, appears in the light of other, peripheral proletarian families, who are both negatively and positively portrayed. Rüppell is also a vociferous social democrat and uneducated revolutionary, to mirror contemporaneous perceptions of social democracy as radical, and its revolutionary impetus as immature and irresponsible. Further proletarian characters are Rose Valentin, who aspires to attain luxury and glamour by means of her attractive appearance, and Folkert Dierks, who arrives in Hamburg from the Holstein marshes to seek work.

The stratum of *Angestellte* in turn is ambivalently portrayed, not only because it is composed variously of employees with and without capital, as seen, respectively, in the protagonists Hüffer and Adrian Schläger.<sup>85</sup> As a class, *Angestellte* are respectable, and like their employers referred to as “Kaufmann” (LS, p. 74), affectively to recollect the pre-industrial societal notion of *Stand*.<sup>86</sup> At the same time, however, for bourgeois protagonists, they have a kind of inbetween or non-status, shown clearly in the conflictual reaction that ensues at the prospect of a marriage between Adrian Schläger

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<sup>84</sup> Narrative time commences in “Aprilmonat” 1892 (LS, p. 102), four months before the onset of the epidemic.

<sup>85</sup> The novel here refers to the German commercial tradition that “clerking [was] viewed as predominantly [...] training for independence as a merchant”, to which was appended as standard business practice the employment of sons of businessmen, at times in more than one firm, as *Angestellte* to gain commercial experience. (Cf. for instance, Carole Elizabeth Adams. *Women Clerks in Wilhelmine Germany. Issues of Class and Gender*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 6-7.)

<sup>86</sup> Ernest Bramsted points out that “it is very difficult to express the German term ‘ständische Gesellschaft’ in English” and uses the terms “‘society based on status’ and ‘Estates-system’” to approximate the meaning. (Cf. Ernest Bramsted. *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes in Germany: Social Types in German Literature 1830-1900*. Chicago: Phoenix Books, [1967], p. 9.) It is also worth noting that a subtle terminological distinction is made within the shared status “Kaufmann”, however, in that business owners, unlike *Angestellte*, are also referred to as “Kaufherr” (e.g. LS, p. 67) to denote their superior status.

and merchant's daughter Alida Bardenfleth (cf. LS, pp. 370-1).<sup>87</sup> Ideal *Angestellte* are portrayed as enterprising, particularly in terms of education and professional development (cf. LS, pp. 65, 68-9). More importantly, the tier is ambivalent because it is presented in terms of two character types, or social potentials, on the one hand, the morally average Hüffer, who is "sehr reich" (LS, p. 80), "nur mit sich beschäftigt" (LS, p. 273), and hence corruptible (cf. LS, pp. 272-3). On the other hand, the morally exceptional Adrian Schläger, while lacking capital excels in business acumen that is grounded in ethical values and loyalty (cf. LS, pp. 184, 230, 373, 380). Adrian has a central function, Hüffer a peripheral one over the narrative trajectory; both, however, impact crucially on events. The social status of this class, therefore, is subtly alluded to not only as nebulous, but also as pivotal. The idea of the "ehrbarer Kaufmann", an ideal historically associated with Hamburg trade,<sup>88</sup> is iterated through the merchant Julius Bardenfleth in tandem with *Angestellter* Adrian. By contrast, through Hüffer, an overly materialistic, manipulable character type emerges, who lacks any essential identity.

The Hamburg bourgeoisie in turn is portrayed in complex terms. The novel's two main bourgeois families, the Bardenfleths and Lindbergs, respectively present Hamburg's old patrician class and the *nouveaux riches*, who are outside the regional context generally referred to as *Wirtschaftsbürger*. This latter stratum is critiqued for an excessively materialistic and insufficiently humanistic orientation: the Lindbergs are portrayed as self-indulgent, immature and self-important. Specifically, Lindberg senior's

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<sup>87</sup> Werner Deich points out that according to his study, "in jedem Roman, in dem eine Einheirat geschildert wird, wird zunächst fast immer davon ausgegangen, daß ein Angestellter bzw. eine Angestellte 'keine Partie' für eine Prinzipalstochter bzw. einen Prinzipalssohn ist." (Werner Deich. *Der Angestellte im Roman*. Berlin: Grote, 1974, p. 123.) For narrative examples, cf. also, Richard Nordhausen. *Die versunkene Stadt*. Roman. Hannover: Sponholtz, 1911; Carl Seeling. *Bankier Fallert. Roman*. Dresden/Leipzig: "Die Sonne", 1912. The same portrayal occurs in early examples of female *Angestellte* who become attached to principal's sons. (Cf. for instance, Max Kretzer. *Die Buchhalterin*. Roman. Dresden: Pierson, 1894; Alfred Bock "Edi Stevens", in: Alfred Bock. *Wo die Straßen enger werden. Geschichten*. Berlin: Fontane, 1900.)

<sup>88</sup> The tradition of commercial honour is encapsulated by Percy Schramm: "Steigende Bedeutung gewann [...] die im 17. Jahrhundert begründete 'Commerz-Deputation', die unmittelbare Vorläuferin der jetzigen Handelskammer, in der sich die erfahrensten Kaufleute zusammenfanden; als allgemeine Vertretung der Kaufmannschaft trat ihr die bis heute erhaltene Versammlung 'Eines Ehrbaren Kaufmanns' gegenüber. Alle diese Einrichtungen waren organisch aus dem mittelalterlich-genossenschaftlichen Leben der Stadt heraus erwachsen und wurden ehrenamtlich von den Bürgern selbst getragen." (Schramm, *Hamburg und die Welt*, p. 17.) The tradition also finds resonance in narrative form. (Cf. for instance, Gustav Kopal. *Vom ehrbaren Kaufmann. Aus dem hanseatischen Kaufmannsleben um 1860*. Hamburg: Otto Meißner Verlag, [n.d.] )



expectation that his will should prevail in both private affairs and in business brooks no opposition and leads to abuses of power. This psychologically realistic turn permits the avoidance of a simplistic, polarised picture between old and new bourgeoisie in which 'new money' is the problem *per se*: attention is additionally drawn to entrepreneurship as both positive value and viable social potential in the context of the merchant city. Thus Herr Meier, representative of a peripheral third bourgeois context that nevertheless has a crucial narrative impact, "hat zwanzig Millionen – oder noch mehr" (LS, p. 372), while his origins are modest:

Als Bauernjunge aus den Vierlanden bin ich hierhergekommen, mein Vater brachte mich als Lehrling in einem vornehmen Kaufhaus unter. Ich weiß noch nicht, weshalb ich nicht auf dem Hofe bleiben sollte, aber ich glaube, die Mutter wollte hoch hinaus mit mir! Nun, es war auch schön hier, und als ich mir erst den Schliff der vornehmen Leute angequält hatte, da fühlte ich mich allmählich behaglich. Die Leute waren nicht so steif und vornehm wie heutzutage, und wer sich genügen ließ und nicht zu hoch hinaus wollte, dem thaten sie auch nichts, nein gar nichts! (LS, pp. 286-7)

Although the novel's conceptualisation of *Heimat* will be the subject of a later discussion, it is worth mentioning briefly that this passage rather elegantly negates a sense of polarisation between city and rural setting, which Kammerhof seeks to extol the novel for – "es war auch schön hier" drily posits the idea of relative merit in city and rural environments. It is principally the excessively profit-orientated attitude, rather than wealth *per se*, which is here critiqued, and in the ambivalent rural-urban juxtaposition, Herr Meier is in turn aligned with the patriciate. This elite, in turn, is observed critically, since despite an erstwhile congenial collective social norm, the "Schliff der vornehmen Leute" had to be "angequält". The slightly didactic tone particularly of the final sentence makes it worth examining the reference to increased stiffness and elegance more closely: Niese's unadorned, colloquial style of narration here at first sight suggests nostalgia, rather than realism. However, the accusation is not directed at the *nouveaux riches*, but rather, at Hamburg society as a whole. Dolores Augustine notes that "during the imperial period, and especially from the 1890s on," Hamburg society adopted a more lavish style, an important reason for which was "the growing competition between established families and newcomers, who had a special need to document their social

status through conspicuous consumption.”<sup>89</sup> The change is illustrated in a first-hand account:

Into the early 1880s guests were served simple food, [...] it was customary to visit acquaintances without advance notice. ‘Then the formal dinner party became obligatory; as a rule, professional cooks and waiters were brought in, always a sumptuous and expensive overabundance, for the saying was, ‘that is what is required nowadays’.<sup>90</sup>

The erstwhile simplicity, to which the novel refers, therefore appears to have been subsumed quite recently prior to the narrative time, to contextualise its critique in terms of a felt sense of urgency.

Stiffness, additionally, is observed in the “Doktorin”, Julius Bardenfleth’s mother: “seine Mutter konnte sich manchmal über Kleinigkeiten aufregen, auf die er gar keinen Wert legte” (LS, p. 34) and she was “keine weiche Natur” (LS, p. 36). In comparison with positively-connoted working class characters, she is consequently depicted as emotionally inadequate, a contrast that becomes clear when her son grieves for his lost child:

“Frau Doktern sollen Herrn Julius trösten!” rief Tante Tine. “Was is der gut daran, daß er noch sein Mutter hat, wo er sein Kopf an ihr Schulter legen un sich mal ausweinen kann!” Über das starre Gesicht der alten Dame flog ein Zucken. Ach, sie hätte wohl die Arme öffnen und das Haupt ihres armen Sohnes hineinbetten mögen; aber es war ihr niemals gegeben gewesen, zärtlich mit ihren Kindern zu sein. [...] Nun saß sie in dem verödeten Hamburg und wußte nicht recht, ob sie gut daran gethan hatte, ihren Sohn und seine Familie zu verlassen. (LS, pp. 195-6)

The psychological realism of this class-specific contrast of behavioural traits and parenting styles, decidedly uncomplimentary about the bourgeoisie, resists any attribution of sentimentality on account of the unalloyed emotionalism of Niese’s straightforward style. The passage derives its poignancy from its psychological astuteness, and arguably, continues to resonate.

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<sup>89</sup> Dolores L. Augustine. *Patricians & Parvenus. Wealth and High Society in Wilhelmine Germany*. Oxford/Providence, USA: Berg, 1994, p. 195.

<sup>90</sup> Marie Bunsen, quoted in: Augustine, *Patricians & Parvenus*, p. 219.

Although 'old' in *Licht und Schatten* refers to such tenets as sensibility, culture, spiritual perceptions and integrity, and 'new' to materialistic preoccupations with an accompanying loss of these tenets, the dichotomy between old and new, or lasting and transient, is not handled through exemplary figures. Niese's use of naturalistic genre conventions sets the agenda of observing the complexity of characters and of portraying events interpretable as a "slice of life".<sup>91</sup> Her integrative style, already seen in previously discussed texts, is also evident in the stark realism of *Licht und Schatten*. Thus the flighty Valeska, Julius Bardenfleth's second wife, who is introduced ironically, as a "gefeierte Balkkönigin, eine junge Dame, die gut unterhielt und sich noch besser kleidete" (LS, p. 36), who at times is ridiculous in her self-centredness and inconsequentiality (cf. LS, pp. 91-2, 108, 140, 145, 168) and who becomes instrumental in causing tragedy for her family on account of her foolishness, is also a "liebenswürdige Frau" (LS, p. 84) and a diplomatic character, who does not harbour resentment or malice. Frau Bardenfleth senior, the Doktorin, is at times avoided by her family for her excessively rigid expectations, yet this inflexibility is subject to amelioration and, while making her susceptible to a degree of emotional inadequacy, does not sacrifice her capacity for feeling, thus she is also a spiritual bulwark to the family.

The sense of authenticity claimed by the novel's referentiality in the cholera year is underlined by its use of actual landmarks and events. In terms of landmarks, class-specific settings are presented: proletarian neighbourhoods like the "Paradies" (LS, p. 6) and the "Slamatjengang" (LS, p. 356) in the interior of the city<sup>92</sup> refer to the old

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<sup>91</sup> Lilian R Furst/Peter N. Skrine. *Naturalism*. London: Methuen & Co., 1971, p. 47.

<sup>92</sup> Percy Schramm observes both the emergence and removal of the *Gängeviertel*, or slums: "Ein Mittel, um neuen Wohnraum zu schaffen, hatte darin bestanden, daß auch die freien Plätze und Gärten hinter den Häusern zugebaut wurden. Auf diese Weise waren Höfe- und Gängeviertel entstanden mit Häusern billigster Bauweise und ganz schmalen, nach oben durch Vorkragen der oberen Geschosse womöglich noch weiter verengten Gäßchen, in denen sich die vis-à-vis Wohnenden die Hand geben konnten. [...] Wie gefährlich solche – den "Slums" in den Weltstädten entsprechenden – Stadtviertel in sanitärer Hinsicht waren, machte 1892 die Cholera-Epidemie deutlich, die Hamburg heimsuchte und die Stadt Hamburg vor ganz Deutschland in ein peinliches Licht rückte. [...] Bereits 1893 trat eine Kommission zusammen, und anhand der von ihr beratenen Pläne begann 1897 die Sanierung [...]." (Percy Ernst Schramm. *Neun Generationen. Dreihundert Jahre deutscher 'Kulturgeschichte' im Lichte der Schicksale einer Hamburger Bürgerfamilie (1648-1948)*. Vol. 2. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964, p. 391.)

“Gängeviertel”, Hamburg’s slum areas since the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>93</sup> Similarly, the then largely new-middle-class district of “Sankt Georg” is where Adrian Schläger, an *Angestellter*, lives in his rented “kleine[s] Wohngemach” (LS, p. 65).<sup>94</sup> Dockenhuden” (LS, p. 25), an elegant area outside Hamburg in the vicinity of Altona, which was reached along the “Elbchaussee” (LS, p. 82),<sup>95</sup> is home to the novel’s principal merchant family, the Bardenfleths.<sup>96</sup> In terms of the depiction of the momentous events that are its subject, the novel, likewise, tallies with historical sources.<sup>97</sup> The disease is narrated as beginning around the middle of August (cf. LS, pp. 141, 143-4) and generally acknowledged as having “commenced around 20 August 1892, and to be abating by 1 October 1892.”<sup>98</sup> Repeated references to an unusually hot and dry August (cf. LS, pp. 125, 141, 147), on one occasion termed a “düstere Prophezeiung” (LS, p. 141), precede the cholera outbreak and intuit a connection between heat and disease. The descriptions accord with actual seasonal conditions, as also noted by Niese in her personal recollections of the epidemic: “jeden Tag brannte die Sonne [...]. In den Häusern war es glühend heiß, und der Herd mußte immer

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Hans Jürgen Teutenberg/ Clemens Wischermann. *Wohnalltag in Deutschland, 1850–1914: Bilder, Daten, Dokumente*. Münster: Coppenrath, 1985, p. 35.

<sup>94</sup> Rita Bake’s observations broadly confirm Niese’s demographically specific districts at the end of the nineteenth century: “Das Kleinbürgertum, z.B. untere Beamte, hatte seinen Wohnraum nach Eimsbüttel und St Georg verlagert. Es lebte meist in Mietwohnungen mit zwei beheizbaren Zimmern und einer Küche.” (Rita Bake/Brita Reimers. *So lebten sie! Spazieren auf den Wegen von Frauen in Hamburgs Alt- und Neustadt*. Hamburg: Christians Verlag, 2003, p. 99.)

<sup>95</sup> The living situation described in *Licht und Schatten* in respect of the merchant family Bardenfleth is contextualised by Schramm, who refers to a fundamental change over the nineteenth century in the patriciate’s residential patterns: “Die Vorfahren waren in der Stadt zu Hause und in den ländlichen Vorstädten zu Gast gewesen; die Nachkommen verwurzelten vor den Toren und verweilten nur noch, dem Berufe nachkommend, tagsüber befristet in der Stadt.” The new pattern involved having a “Vorstadtvilla” built, which was often set in its own park,” which is also described as the Bardenfleths’ situation. (Cf. Schramm, *Neun Generationen*, pp. 242-248, here pp. 242, 245, 248.)

<sup>96</sup> Bake observes that “die Kaufmannschaft hatte nur noch ihre Kontore in der Alt- und Neustadt, ihre Wohnungen und Häuser lagen nun in Harvestehude und Uhlenhorst. Dort lebten ca. zehn Prozent der Hamburger Oberschicht.” (Bake/Reimers, *So lebten sie!*, p. 99.) Niese here provides additional information by observing the tendency to move further out than Harvestehude or Uhlenhorst, which lie to the North of the city, and by given detailed descriptions of the “Elbchaussee”.

<sup>97</sup> According to Stefan Winkle, at this early point, “um Gerüchte zu entkräften, erschienen in den Tageblättern beschwichtigende Erläuterungen über den Unterschied zwischen der einheimischen ‘Cholera nostras’, auch ‘Cholérine’ genannt, und der in Rußland grassierenden ‘Cholera asiatica’”. (Stefan Winkle. “Chronologie und Konsequenzen der Hamburger Cholera von 1892”, in: *Hamburger Ärzteblatt Heft*. Vol. 12/1983; Vol. 1/1984. Online version: <<http://www.aerztekammer-hamburg.de/funktionen/aebonline/pdfs/1181649741.pdf>>. Accessed 12 Dec. 2013.)

<sup>98</sup> Cf. for instance, “The Cholera”, in: *The British Medical Journal*. Vol. 2, No. 1658 (8 Oct. 1892), pp. 811, 814. The date of onset here is the day when the exponential character of the outbreak first became apparent. Winkle, who consults “zeitgenössische[] Publikationen, Zeitungsnotizen, Verlautbarungen, Briefe[], Tagebuchaufzeichnungen, Protokolle[] der Hamburger Bürgerschaftssitzungen etc.” actually traces the first instances of the disease to 15 and 16 August, when labourers working at the Elbe’s “Sielauslässe” succumb. (Winkle, “Chronologie und Konsequenzen der Hamburger Cholera von 1892”.)

brennen, um heißes Wasser zum Spülen zu haben.”<sup>99</sup> Stefan Winkle, quoting a newspaper report, substantiates the connection between heat wave and epidemic, which in the novel is left implicit:

Die Flutwellen [...] die bekanntlich täglich für ungefähr 2 mal 6 Stunden eine elbaufwärts gerichtete Strömung erzeugen, waren damals besonders hoch, die von oben zufließende Frischwassermenge dagegen bei dem herrschenden trockenen Wetter gering. Man kann fast sagen, daß unter solchen Wetterverhältnissen immer dasselbe Wasser mit Flut und Ebbe im Hamburger Hafen auf- und abgeschwappt und durch die Sielwässer und alle Abgänge der Schiffe und Kähne schmutziger wird.<sup>100</sup>

The novel makes no explicit reference to this ominous condition, although narratorial awareness that the outbreak is tied to the river Elbe is explicit. *Licht und Schatten* specifies that the disease is concentrated “am Hafen, im Hammerbrook, dort, wo die sogenannten kleinen Leute wohnen” (LS, p. 172), again in accordance with retrospective findings.<sup>101</sup>

The novel focuses on the Bardenfleth family to highlight typical bourgeois reactions to news of the disease. A single conversation highlights an array of factors:

“Man muß von diesen Dingen nicht allzuviel Aufhebens machen! Wir haben in Hamburg wer weiß wie oft die Cholera gehabt und niemals viel davon gesprochen. Da sind immer Leute, die unmäßig unreifes Obst essen und dann infolge ihrer Unmäßigkeit sterben. Jetzt wird alles gleich an die große Glocke geschlagen!” “Die Gemüsefrau sagte, das Leitungswasser sei vergiftet!” bemerkte Alida. “Unsinn!” Jetzt mußte Frau Valeska doch auch ihre Meinung sagen. Das Elbwasser ist sehr gut! Wie schön werden die Gärten damit begossen! Zu trinken braucht man es ja nicht!” “Aber die armen Leute, die kein andres Wasser haben?” “Liebes Kind, die haben dies Wasser jahraus jahrein getrunken und sind daran gewöhnt. Wie sollte das Wasser plötzlich anders geworden sein?” “Wir bauen ja auch eine neue Wasserleitung mit Filtrationsgeschichten und allen modernen Erfordernissen!” setzte Bardenfleth hinzu. Schon seit Jahren bewilligen wir große Summen dafür in der Bürgerschaft!” (LS, pp. 144-5)

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<sup>99</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, pp. 218-19.

<sup>100</sup> Winkle, “Chronologie und Konsequenzen der Hamburger Cholera von 1892”. – Winkle also quotes an article in the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* dated 16 Aug 1892: “Infolge der schon Tage herrschenden ungewöhnlichen Hitze und des niedrigen Elbwasserstandes lagen die Fleete (die bei geöffneten Schleusen Ebbe und Flut mitmachten), ‘an vielen Stunden des Tages mit Schlamm und faulenden Abfällen trocken’” (ibid.).

<sup>101</sup> T. W. Hime gives a table of cholera cases by eleven districts between 14 August and 24 September 1892 that shows inner city areas, in particular the “Interior”, “St Georg”, “St Pauli” and “the Elbe”, as well as the immediate suburbs on the shores of the Alster to be the worst affected, both proportionally, by density of population, and by numbers *per se*. Total cases for this date range are recorded as being 13,253. (Cf. T. W. Hime. “The Cholera in Hamburg”, in: *The British Medical Journal*. Vol. 2, No. 1658 (8 Oct. 1892), p.814.) Winkle notes: “Die Cholera breitete sich vom Hafen über die Steinstraße mit ihren vielen Höfen und Gängewohnungen nach St. Georg aus.” (Cf. Winkle, “Chronologie und Konsequenzen der Hamburger Cholera von 1892”).

The belief that fruit and milk could cause cholera was widespread, as Niese recollects:

Wenn die Gemüsebauern vom Altenland und von den Vierlanden mit ihren schönen Früchten an die Stadt kamen, mußten sie wieder umkehren. Auch in Altona durften sie nicht anlegen, ebenso wie die Milchbauern keine rohe Milch bringen durften.<sup>102</sup>

The supposition concerning dietary factors was tied up with the previously alluded-to confusion, partly due to reports in the press, between “‘Cholera nostras’, auch ‘Cholerine’ genannt, und der in Rußland entstehenden ‘Cholera asiatica’”.<sup>103</sup> It is registered in “Frau Valeska’s” belief that what was occurring was “eine Art Sommerkrankheit” which “kommt ja in jedem Herbst und Spätsommer” (LS, p. 144), and subsequently in the Doktorin’s ambiguous comment that “die Leute nehmen sich mit ihrer Lebensweise nicht in acht!” (LS, p. 172), which causes the incredulity of a doctor, with whom she is in conversation.

Conversely, the allegation of contaminated drinking water, referred to by Alida, initiates the novel’s stringent critique of the Hamburg bourgeoisie. The portrayal of Valeska in the related conversation not only contributes to the depiction of this character as slightly ridiculous and solely orientated in her own advantage. Since Niese keenly followed the progress of events,<sup>104</sup> it can be deemed intentionally to have been directed at Hamburg’s bourgeoisie in general. Stefan Winkle observes:

Nachdem [Robert] Koch das Hamburger Trinkwasser als ‘verpestet’ bezeichnet hatte, wurde die Bevölkerung durch Plakate vor dem Genuß ungekochten Leitungswassers gewarnt. ‘Die Polizeibehörde gibt bekannt [...] Nicht nur zum Trinken, auch zum Reinigen von Eß und Trinkgeschirren sollte nur abgekochtes Wasser benutzt werden. [...] Da bei der fast tropischen Hitze in den vornehmen Vierteln das ‘fortwährende Laufen von Springbrunnen und Gartenbesprengungen zu einer allgemeinen Wasserknappheit [...] führte, ersuchte man alle einsichtsvollen Abnehmer, sich im Wasserverbrauch thunlichst zu beschränken.’<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 218.

<sup>103</sup> Winkle, “Chronologie und Konsequenzen der Hamburger Cholera von 1892”.

<sup>104</sup> Her recollections refer to “polizeilichen Abwehrregeln” which among other things included a prohibition to drink unboiled water (Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 217).

<sup>105</sup> Winkle, “Chronologie und Konsequenzen der Hamburger Cholera von 1892”. – The reference here is to Robert Koch, a then famous bacteriologist, who had been sent by the “preußischen Gesundheitsminister nach Hamburg”.

Valeska's callous oblivion therefore is also that of the bourgeoisie generally. Similarly, her question how the water should suddenly have become different is echoed in a subsequently much-condemned report by Hamburg's sanitary officer, Dr. Erman:

It is said that in this epidemic the extraordinarily quick increase of cholera cases point[s] to the entrance of cholera germs into the water pipes. But when one considers the ten former epidemics of cholera in Hamburg, in which the water supply was managed essentially on the same plan as at present, and in which the fouling of the Elbe by the excreta of the sick took place just as in this epidemic, without any such sudden and widespread outbreak of the epidemic, one will be very suspicious of the statement that this year's enormous extent of the disease is due to the germs, of which the town water is said to be full.<sup>106</sup>

The import, both actual and fictionally portrayed, is complacency and denial – the novel appears to spell out the crass meaning implicit in Dr Erman's report in Valeska's dismissal of Hamburg's poor, who "haben dies Wasser jahraus jahrein getrunken und sind daran gewöhnt". The unflattering alignment of such official voices as Dr Erman's with that of Valeska, who throughout the novel is not distinguished by intelligence or compassion, can feasibly have been a veiled authorial commentary by Niese, who in her autobiography comments of this time that "man darf bekanntlich nicht alles sagen, was man weiß."<sup>107</sup> Finally, the defence mounted by Julius Bardenfleth, that the *Bürgerschaft*<sup>108</sup> has for years agreed to provide "große Summen" for a new water filtration system, finds resonance in the "Protokoll von der Sitzung der Hamburger Bürgerschaft am 1. Oktober 1892":

Im Juni 1888 [...] scheiterte der von der Bürgerschaft bereits gebilligte Ausbau der Sandfiltration an einem geradezu lächerlich erscheinenden Wassertarif von 50 000.– Mark, auf dem der Senat bestand.<sup>109</sup>

The novel's main subject therefore observably relates to documented events. Niese notes of her authoring of *Licht und Schatten* that

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<sup>106</sup> Andrew Clark/William Henry Allchin. "The Cholera", in: *The British Medical Journal*. Vol 2, No. 1655 (17 Sep. 1892), p. 655.

<sup>107</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 223.

<sup>108</sup> Andrew Clark and William Allchin describe Hamburg's system of government: "Hamburg has two legislative bodies – the Senate, a kind of upper house, and the Bürgerschaft, or house of citizens." (Clark/Allchin, "The Cholera", p. 655.)

<sup>109</sup> Quoted in Winkle, "Chronologie und Konsequenzen der Hamburger Cholera von 1892". – Beyond quoting the meeting protocol, Winkle here also gives anecdotal evidence about the disagreement about the water filtration system between *Bürgerschaft* and senate, to indicate a situation that appears to have been both common knowledge and rather infamous at the time. It likewise incriminates the senate, rather than the *Bürgerschaft* in respect of irresponsible and fateful apathy.

eine Skizze hatte ich allerdings gleich gemacht; aber dann empfand ich Scheu, diese Erlebnisse, die mir einen tiefen Eindruck gemacht hatten, zu schildern. Erst als mein Verleger Grunow von dem Plan erfuhr, ist er ausgeführt worden.<sup>110</sup>

Equally apparent will be that her social critique, while conservative in gist, is not one-sided: in terms of the main event of the “Zeit”, the portrayal of the Hamburg bourgeoisie cannot be claimed to be apologetic or ameliorative.

### Overt Value Formulations and their Subtexts

In order to explore the relationship between the novel’s overt value-systems and sub-textual material, which in part runs counter to the former, it is necessary first to consider the regional specificity of the Hamburg bourgeoisie more closely. In the social portrayal provided by *Licht und Schatten*, the aristocracy does not figure, even peripherally. The potential significance of this absence is worth considering in the light of G. P. Gooch’s comments:

The study both of German society and German literature must be pursued not merely chronologically but regionally. For the differences in temperament and tradition between North and South, between East Prussia and the Rhineland, were and are too deep to be removed by the political unifications of Bismarck and his successors.<sup>111</sup>

This comment, which was not made in relation to *Heimatliteratur* and its vagaries and variations, inadvertently confirms regionally-based writing as a phenomenon commensurate with centuries of German history. “Differences in temperament” here overtly relates to qualitative differences in the portrayal of values and relationships, and implicitly also to authorial background. This idea is of sufficient interest to be worth pursuing, even though it lends itself to tentative, rather than definitive findings. Rather, its *exclusion* points irresistibly to a missed opportunity in respect of a differentiated understanding of the import of individual texts. *Licht und Schatten* is potentially well-

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<sup>110</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 227.

<sup>111</sup> G.P. Gooch. “Foreword”, in: Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. xviii.



suited to the inclusion of such a consideration. Augustine's comparison of Hamburg and Berlin highlights the significance of the lack of an aristocracy:

With respect to Hamburg, historians are generally in agreement with Richard J. Evans in his assertion that 'neither the economic activity nor the social world nor finally the political beliefs and actions of the Hamburg merchants corresponded to anything that has ever been defined, however remotely, as *feudal*.' Berlin, on the other hand, was dominated by the Imperial Court and the Junkers, who, it is said, seduced and fatally weakened the business elite of the capital.<sup>112</sup>

Outside the *Hansestädte*, development of the *Bürgertum* occurred in tandem – or in friction – with the aristocracy, and its identity was defined by the contrast between them. The historical absence of an aristocracy in the *Hansestädte* therefore was instrumental in constructing genteel self-perception differently than was the case elsewhere. While a detailed discussion of the psychological precedents of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth century societal tendencies is beyond the scope of the present discussion, some brief observations are necessary. They concern those internalised mental and emotional patterns which can survive even major societal shifts and upheavals.<sup>113</sup>

Ernest Bramsted's exposition of pre-industrial Germany, which highlights the existence of persistent segregational social structures, is useful to this consideration. According to him, social barriers delineated by an exclusive society in the eighteenth century meant that striving for acceptance and validation on the part of the *Bürgertum* against the aristocracy was a perpetual, as well as losing battle. He highlights *perceptual* structures which scripted the *Bürgertum* as the aristocracy's *other*,<sup>114</sup> as such, the former was scripted as irremediably inferior counterpoint of the latter. The contrast is succinctly formulated by Johann Wolfgang Goethe:

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<sup>112</sup> Evans, quoted in: Augustine, *Patricians & Parvenus*, p. 27.

<sup>113</sup> For a further discussion of this phenomenon, cf. "Social Transformation in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*", pp. 255-6. Methodologically, the perspective refers back to the work of Michel Foucault as well as Carl Gustav Jung, who, despite differences of approach, both focused on conceptual genealogies. Friedrich Nietzsche, of course, had likewise done so in the late nineteenth century. (Cf. for instance, Friedrich Nietzsche. *Zur Genealogie der Moral*. Leipzig: Naumann, 1889; Michel Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. London: Penguin, 1978; Carl Gustav Jung. *Psychology of the Unconscious*. London: Kegan Paul, 1915.)

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, pp. 25-34.

Wenn der Edelmann im gemeinen Leben gar keine Grenzen kennt, wenn man aus ihm Könige oder königähnliche Figuren erschaffen kann, so darf er überall [...] vorwärts dringen, anstatt daß dem Bürger nichts besser ansteht, als das reine, stille Gefühl der Grenzlinie, die ihm gezogen ist. Er darf nicht fragen: "Was bist du?" sondern nur: "Was hast du?, welche Einsicht, welche Kenntnis, welche Fähigkeit, wieviel Vermögen?" Wenn der Edelmann durch die Darstellung seiner Person alles gibt, so gibt der Bürger durch seine Persönlichkeit nichts und soll nichts geben.<sup>115</sup>

In psychological terms, the difference between identity based on intrinsic value and extrinsic worth is sufficiently stark to merit emphasising. Counter-scripting, by a "middle-class [which] boasted of its modesty, honesty and diligence as virtues in contrast with the aristocratic vices of frivolity, arrogance and lack of principle",<sup>116</sup> may appear to have reversed the superiority-inferiority dichotomy in the commoner's favour. It does not, however, challenge its basic terms. Education and morality, for instance, can only be demonstrated through appropriate behaviours, and thus essentially are appendages, akin to material possessions – they do not signify *intrinsic* value. Even the formulation of the "Naturrecht", meant to convey the idea of equality by nature though not by birth in a feudal societal situation and therefore potentially presenting serious resistance against the underlying *conceptual* status quo, did not have the intended impact. This is not only because the *Bürgertum* was not unanimous in its resistance – inevitably perhaps, a "defiant, suppressed intelligentsia of opposition" was supplemented by a "loyal intelligentsia which had either already gained a footing in the upper grade, or hoped to gain such a footing."<sup>117</sup> Additionally, not only was the idea conciliatory in gist, but its idealistic theoretical basis diverged from its practical reality:

wenn vom Naturrecht des Menschen im 18. Jahrhundert geredet wird, wird nahezu durchweg der vernünftige Bürger mit unscharfen Grenzen zum ständischen Adel angesprochen. Der sogenannte 'Pöbel' bleibt den Tatsachen nach [...] nahezu gänzlich davon ausgeschlossen, mag er auch in der Theorie mitgemeint sein.

<sup>115</sup> Johann Wolfgang Goethe. *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*. Vol. 5, Chapter 3, in: Erich Trunz (ed.). *Goethe. Werke. Hamburg Edition*. Vol. 7. Munich: Beck, 1981, p. 291.

<sup>116</sup> Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. 35. – Rolf Grimminger refers to a new "moralische Offensive", which begins in the mid eighteenth century and which is directed against "die politischen Zustände [...]. Man wendet sich empört gegen den sowohl korrupt 'lüsternen' wie staatsragenden Hofadel. Die Empörung antwortet sicher auch auf die jetzt deutliche 'Aristokratisierung' der Hof-Verwaltung: Der Hof schließt sich allmählich hermetisch gegen den Nichtadel ab." (Rolf Grimminger. "Aufklärung, Absolutismus und bürgerliche Individuen. Über den notwendigen Zusammenhang von Literatur, Gesellschaft und Staat in der Geschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts", in: Rolf Grimminger (ed.) *Hansers Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur vom 16. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*. Vol 3. Munich/Vienna: Carl Hanser, 2000, p. 55.) The moral offensive here therefore occurs in response to an intensification of the existing dichotomy.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. 26.

Außerdem läßt sich das Naturrecht in der Konstruktion des sogenannten 'Unterwerfungsvertrags' auch mit der Herrschaft des absolutistischen Staates vereinbaren, insofern dieser mit seinem Herrschaftsrecht auch die Sorgepflicht auf sich nimmt, das Gemeinwohl der unterworfenen Gesellschaft zu beschützen und zu lenken.<sup>118</sup>

As a concept, it therefore appears not to have been sufficiently consequential – consequentiality would have meant the compromise of the social system in its entirety. A notion of universal right that excludes the lower strata suggests that the actual reality of the "Naturrecht" was the specific struggle of the "vernünftigen Bürger" against the "ständischen Adel", and the covert impetus to have been the elevation of the former, rather than equality *per se*. The concept, therefore, attempted to dismantle the socio-political structure and simultaneously needed it to remain intact.

The observations presented above are not intended as a simple explanation for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century attitudes of the *Bürgertum* to "the precedence of an aristocracy which, although indeed forced on to the defensive, was still politically influential and socially predominant."<sup>119</sup> As Bramsted observes,

an inductive analysis shows rather that the psychological attitude in both camps was a complex one, and that there were various reactions to the existence of the rival class.<sup>120</sup>

The factors highlighted are worth considering closely, however, because of an observable tenacity which applies to them. The ongoing ascendancy of the social classes over the *Ständegesellschaft* did not reverse the constellation of identity in terms of inferiority and superiority: liberalism may have attained a "new aggressiveness" over the nineteenth century; "in the larger cities the aristocracy" may no longer have endangered the "growing strong self-confidence of the middle-class,"<sup>121</sup> yet "the secret imitation and admiration of the aristocratic style of life has been repeatedly confirmed by skilled observers between 1850 and 1914 in Germany".<sup>122</sup> The

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<sup>118</sup> Rolf Grimminger, "Aufklärung", p. 21.

<sup>119</sup> Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. 150.

<sup>120</sup> Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. 150.

<sup>121</sup> Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. 43. – Bramsted uses 'middle-class' to denote the *Bürgertum*, not the industrial new middle class.

<sup>122</sup> Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. 191.

aristocracy continued “to irritate the burgher in his sensitive spot – his desire for social acceptance,”<sup>123</sup> a situation that continued into the late nineteenth century:

Professors enjoyed a high prestige in middle-class circles, and the middle-class was not a little hurt when their idol, the professor, was not accepted at court. Similarly, the aristocratic husbands of mixed marriages were subjected to an inner conflict, for entry at court was forbidden to their bourgeois wives. Bismarck’s mother, for example, a middle-class professor’s daughter, could not appear in court.<sup>124</sup>

These observations may be used to interrogate temperamental differences between the Hamburg patriciate and the *Bildungsbürgertum*. For instance, conscious and unconscious anxieties about self and status would accordingly have been deep-rooted in the latter, while being a historically recent appendage without a strong hold on the former. The clear-cut dichotomy between humanistic and materialistic value-systems, as seen between *Bildungsbürgertum* and *Wirtschaftsbürgertum*<sup>125</sup> in the nineteenth century – both the dichotomising and the superior-inferior connotations here suggest a transferral of the basic psychological situation discussed – did not exist for the merchant class in the same way,<sup>126</sup> although “Bildung” was of course of as profound significance to the patriciate<sup>127</sup> as it was to the *Bildungsbürger*.

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<sup>123</sup> Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. 42. – The situation is not confined to Prussia, of course. Bramsted points out, for instance, that it existed in nineteenth-century Austria, where “especially in Vienna as the meeting-place of Hungarian, Bohemian, Polish, Italian and German nobles in the Metternich period, the permanent humiliation and repression of the burghers was displayed.” (Gutzkow, quoted in: Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. 42.) The larger issue at hand is the psychological unviability of any caste-type system which frames inequality in psychologically inescapable terms.

<sup>124</sup> Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, pp. 42-3.

<sup>125</sup> This dichotomy was of course not sustainable in the long run, as Georg Bollenbeck points out: “Mit der Spezialisierung der Wissenschaften und der fortschreitenden Akademisierung verlor das Bildungsbürgertum unaufhaltsam an Kompetenz, Wissensbestände zu repräsentieren und zu normieren; Wissensbestände, die kollektiv in industrieähnlichen Forschungsinstituten entstehen und deren explosionsartige Erweiterung sich nicht mehr an das alte Bildungsideal ‘Selbstvervollkommnung der Persönlichkeit’ anbinden läßt.” (Georg Bollenbeck. *Bildung und Kultur. Glanz und Elend eines deutschen Deutungsmusters*. Frankfurt/Leipzig: Insel, 1994, p. 252.)

<sup>126</sup> The value of the idea articulated by Ernest Bramsted, that the patrician class is better defined in terms of *Stand* than of class, is here accepted insofar as *Stand* was defined by legal rights. The term ‘class’ is not avoided however, but rather loosely used on account of its general contemporary designation ‘social stratum’. Bramsted’s designation of the patriciate as a “special aristocracy” is not deemed similarly useful because it is historically characterised as independence from feudality which this term tends unhelpfully to obscure. (Cf. Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, pp. 8, 152.) The patriciate’s tendency to create internal hierarchical distinctions, according to which some good families were better than others, is similar not only to the aristocracy, but also to the German bourgeoisie elsewhere. (Cf. Percy Ernst Schramm. *Neun Generationen. Dreihundert Jahre deutscher ‘Kulturgeschichte’ im Lichte der Schicksale einer Hamburger Bürgerfamilie (1648-1948)*. Vol. 2. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964, p. 417; cf. also Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, pp. 15-7.)

<sup>127</sup> According to Harry Graf Kessler’s memories as an adolescent educated in Hamburg, “Wenn von jemand gesagt wurde, er sei ‘ungebildet’, so war es, wie wenn es in England hieß, jemand sein ‘kein

The *Wirtschaftsbürger* presented a serious challenge to the patriciate of the *Hansestädte* similarly to the way they did to the *Bildungsbürgertum* in Prussia. Rivalries are documented in respect of both old strata, yet there are differences in the way these manifested. For instance, “das Gefühl wachsender Bedrohung [...] trieb das *Bildungsbürgertum* nach rechts, an die Seite der alten Machteliten”.<sup>128</sup> Compensatory behaviours involved emulation of traditionally aristocratic activities:

Als wichtigstes Scharnier im Verhältnis zwischen Bildungsbürgertum und Militärmonarchie fungierte die Institution des Reserveoffiziers. [...] Gerade für Söhne des Bürgertums stellte das Einjährigen-Freiwilligensystems eine attraktive Möglichkeit dar, die zivile Karriereplanung mit einem militärischen Titel zu verbinden, der seinem Träger ein hohes gesellschaftliches Ansehen verschaffte und seine Aussichten auf berufliches Fortkommen entscheidend verbesserte.<sup>129</sup>

Ullrich observes that “Akademiker neben Offizieren das größte Kontingent in der Duellstatistik des Kaiserreichs stellten,”<sup>130</sup> while August Bebel notes, “der Moralkodex des Reserveleutnants ist der Moralkodex der bürgerlichen Klassen geworden”.<sup>131</sup> By comparison, while Augustine highlights the existence of “growing competition between established families and social newcomers” in the 1890s,<sup>132</sup> as previously highlighted, a first-hand account about lavish entertainments in Hamburg around 1900 demonstrates a marked difference in attitude:

Offiziere sah man nur selten; denn das Infanterie-Regiment 76 wurde über die Achsel angesehen, und die Wandsbeker Husaren standen bei den Vätern in dem Verdacht, daß sie auf reiche Erbsinnen ausseien. Die Hamburger ‘Gesellschaft’ galt als ‘exklusiv’; in der Tat tauchten nur wenige auf, die man gar nicht kannte.<sup>133</sup>

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Gentleman’, es gab nichts Geringschätzigeres! Der Kult der Bildung hatte etwas Mystisches!” (Harry Graf Kessler, quoted in: Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 160.)

<sup>128</sup> Volker Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht 1871-1914. Aufstieg und Untergang des deutschen Kaiserreichs*. Frankfurt: Fischer, 2010, p. 289

<sup>129</sup> Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 289.

<sup>130</sup> Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 290. – Ullrich is right to point out that the issue was not “eine adlige Konvention einfach zu imitieren, also um ein feudales Relikt, das umstandslos in die bürgerliche Lebenswelt überführt worden wäre.” Quoting Ute Frevert, he asserts that “das Duell eröffnete ‘die Möglichkeit, den eigenen, aus einem antiständischen Berufsthos entspringenden Anspruch auf individuelle Integrität glaubhaft zu inszenieren’” (ibid.). This does not alter the psychological dynamic emphasised by Bramsted, however, since such a dynamic invariably involves complex and paradoxical behaviours that combine contradictory tendencies, in this case the “simultaneous contempt and imitation of the aristocracy” on the part of “the upper middle-class” (Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. 192).

<sup>131</sup> Bebel, quoted in: Ute Frevert, *Ehrenmänner. Das Duell in der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 1991, p. 121.

<sup>132</sup> Augustine, *Patricians and Parvenus*, p. 195.

<sup>133</sup> Schramm, *Neun Generationen*, p. 425.

The bourgeois focalisation of *Licht und Schatten* is helpful to an interpretation that includes a consideration of “differences in temperament and tradition”, as proposed by Gooch.<sup>134</sup> In terms of authorial temperament, Niese was, of course, not herself from Hamburg, but from “Niederdeutschland”<sup>135</sup> in its wider sense. As already noted, Niese based the novel on careful first-hand observation; she had settled in neighbouring Altona several years prior to writing *Licht und Schatten*, while the memoirs of her formative experiences on Fehmarn demonstrate an absence of the experience of the aristocracy as meaningful psychological factor.<sup>136</sup> The author’s political outlook, which can be described as liberal with conservative underpinnings, was arguably well-suited to an intimate portrayal of Hamburg and its patriciate. While the direct portrayal of this class is of note in *Licht und Schatten*, it is ultimately the entire portrayal of society, the specificity of inter-relations between strata as also the portrayals of gender which here form the regionally specific interest. As previously noted, both overt and subtextually constructed, potentially unintended meanings contribute to this portrayal.

### The Hamburg Patriciate

The Doktorin’s disidentification of “Hamburger Großkaufleute” from “Krämergeist” because the former are concerned “mit andren Dinge[n] die sich wohl mit Kultur und

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<sup>134</sup> G.P. Gooch. “Foreword”, in: Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes*, p. xviii.

<sup>135</sup> Kammerhof applies this term to Schleswig-Holstein, the wider region, and to authorial temperament, including Niese, Detlev von Liliencron, Johannes Dose and Helene Voigt-Diederich etc, as previously discussed (cf. “Autobiography as *Heimatliteratur*”, p. 65; cf. also Kammerhof, “Charlotte Niese”, p. 9.)

<sup>136</sup> One of Niese’s autobiographical sketches, which includes exposure to aristocratic ladies, rather narrate an entire incomprehension of their status in a series of notably comic moments. (Cf. for instance, “Die Reise ins Kloster”, in: Charlotte Niese. *Aus dänischer Zeit. Bilder und Skizzen*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1903, pp. 331, 333-4, 335, 337.) Niese’s subsequently published memoirs refer to a family friend, “Tante Lucie”, who became educator and important mentor to the author during her adolescence and who had connections with the Danish, rather than German court. The Fehmarn island mentality can be seen in an episode which relates the presence of the Prussians as oppressive but which does not extend aversion to individuals: “Preußen schickte gern seine adeligen Assessoren, die weder Land noch Leute kannten, in unsere Provinz und machte sich nicht gerade mit dieser Maßregel beliebt. Graf Reventlow war im übrigen ein sehr kluger angenehmer Mann. Ehe seine Familie kam, hat er manchen Abend bei Großvater gesessen und nette Geschichten erzählt. Auch mit Tante Lucie unterhielt er sich gern, und sie, die von ihrem Hofleben her viele adelige Bekanntschaften hatte, konnte mit ihm über viele Menschen sprechen.” (Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, pp. 136-7.) The impression is that for Niese, simple human interactions took precedence over preoccupation with rank.

Bildung vereinen lassen" (LS, p. 143) provides a notable initial reference to the traditional combination of trade and culture. The terminology *Wirtschaftsbürger* is here avoided: although not a misnomer in the late nineteenth-century Hamburg business context, it linguistically signals its counterpart, the *Bildungsbürgertum*, which, as has been seen, does not apply to the *Hansestädte*. The "Krämergeist" instead is attributed to Hamburg's *nouveaux riches*, whose accumulation of extreme wealth is dismissed as of negligible import in a conversation between Valeska and Julius Bardenfleth:

"Denke doch, wie viel glänzender z.B. Lindbergs leben. Herr Lindberg hat neulich seiner Frau gleich den Achenbach geschenkt, der bei Bock hing, und ein Pendant dazu. Beide haben zusammen nur zwanzigtausend Mark gekostet!" "Lindberg ist sehr viel reicher als ich!" erwiderte Bardenfleth kurz. (LS, p. 140)

Envy is here framed as untenable partly because it proceeds from an inconsequential standpoint – it begins with Valeska's pleading that her sons be educated nearby at their behest "obgleich [sie] nicht gerade dafür war, die Nähe ihrer großen Söhne immer zu genießen" (LS, p. 140). This motive is quickly transmuted to a veiled complaint about receiving insufficient gifts from her husband, and forms part of her general discontent with the means at her disposal (cf. also LS, pp. 83, 89-90, 187), though not with her position in life. Valeska's predominant function in this novel can be described as the portrayal of the desire for self-indulgence in terms of its psychological consequences.

The portrayal of Valeska, as irritant to the Bardenfleth family's values, is worth examining more closely. Her own social origin is left largely oblique, although a "Großonkel", who had been a Hamburg senator, at length appears (cf. LS, p. 167). She is thus allied with the merchant class: according to Evans, the "18 auf Lebenszeit amtierenden Senatoren" were composed of "reiche Großkaufmannsfamilien" who since the "Verfassungsreform des Jahres 1860 [...] zusammen mit der Bürgerschaft [regierten]."<sup>137</sup> Initially, Valeska is introduced through three consecutive viewpoints: those of her husband Julius Bardenfleth, her mother-in-law, and step-daughter Alida

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<sup>137</sup> Richard J. Evans (ed.). *Kneipengespräche im Kaiserreich. Die Stimmungsberichte der Hamburger Politischen Polizei 1892-1914*. Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1989, p. 9.

respectively. Thus she is an “etwas oberflächliche Natur” (LS, p. 33), “eine Schönheit” and “gefeierte Ballkönigin” with merely a great sense of fashion (cf. LS, 36), for whom “Bazare und Wohlthätigkeitsveranstaltungen” provide “genügende Beschäftigung und genügende Gelegenheit zum Geldausgeben” (LS, pp. 39-40). Julius is required to furnish her a “Rokokozimmer” (LS, p. 68) and her interests centre on desirable acquisitions (cf. LS, p. 89), elegant friends, bazaars, performances, new books and the newest happenings in Hamburg high society (LS, p. 132), on extended travel during the summer months (LS, p. 86) and on “Bälle” during the winter (LS, p. 133). The “Welle des Materialismus”<sup>138</sup> of a burgeoning consumer society, which through Valeska is observed as manifesting within the patriciate as well as in the other social strata, thus appears as a pervasive phenomenon. The bazaars mentioned by Alida, while not exactly portrayed as worthless, are elsewhere described as vogue and self-indulgent activity (cf. LS, pp. 84-5, 92). They are connoted as insincere by the Doktorin:

Wohlthätigkeitsbazare gab es auch nicht alle Jahre. Wenn ich Geld für die Armen ausgeben wollte, dann gab ich es ihnen direkt und machte mir nicht noch viele andre Ausgaben, nur, damit ich auch noch Vergnügen dabei hätte! (LS, p. 130)

The references to showmanship are astute – Augustine notes that from the 1890s onwards, “Hamburg [...] society adopted a new style. An active social life requiring considerable expenditures became the norm.”<sup>139</sup>

The social life of Hamburg wholesale merchants and bankers was characterized by the frequency of social events, lavish expenditures, luxury, and social sophistication. Balls for more than one hundred guests were not a rarity, and they were held in private homes.<sup>140</sup>

Valeska’s “Bälle” are implied to be a regular occurrence, but do not appear in the context of the Bardenfleth home, where resistance to the trend appears: guests are invited “gelegentlich” and social gatherings are “behaglich” (cf. LS, p. 133). A clear-cut social dichotomy, in which the *nouveaux riches* act as culprit and counterpoint, here

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 13.

<sup>139</sup> Augustine, *Patricians and Parvenus*, p. 195.

<sup>140</sup> Augustine, *Patricians and Parvenus*, p. 195.



therefore does not occur. A *conceptual* clash, however, which takes place in the contemporaneous collective mental life, is acknowledged.

The psychological consequences of Valeska's mind-set appear in stark contrast to her inconsequential appearance. They are initially shown in terms of incongruity, simultaneously to take up the novel's peripheral thematisation of sexual morality. Alida breaks her engagement with Oskar Lindberg on account of his avowal that he would not give up his actress girlfriend "bloß aus dem Grunde, weil er sich, seinem Vater zuliebe, verheiraten werde" (LS, p. 45). The Doktorin's reaction is narrated prior to that of Valeska and provides a notable comparison. The former meets Alida's narration of Oskar's view, that "um solche Angelegenheiten hätten sich kleine brave Mädchen nicht zu kümmern" with "ungläubigen Entsetzen" (LS, 45). Imagery is enlisted to symbolise import:

"Rücke aus der Sonne!" sagte die Doktorin ungeduldig. Der blasse Schein machte ihr, der sonst selbst so kühl und verständig denkenden Frau, den Eindruck, als sei er eine Illustration zu dem blassen Glück, das man ihrem Enkelkinde hatte geben wollen. (LS, p. 46)

By contrast, Valeska is focalised through Alida's perspective: "Ihre Stiefmutter sprach seit einiger Zeit so viel von Lindbergs, und sie fand dieses Thema unzeit." The stepmother, in her turn, finds that "die Geschichte mit Oskar ist doch dumm! Im Grunde ist er ein guter Junge" who additionally would have made a "reichen Schwager" for her sons (cf. LS, p. 90). According to her view, Alida is too modern and independent:

"Es wäre ja auch so nett gewesen, und es ist sonderbar, daß die Mädchen jetzt immer ihre eignen Wege gehen wollen. Nun, unterbrich mich nicht [...] ich sage immer, daß die Frauen verzeihen müssen!" "Du würdest also auch verzeihen, wenn Papa sich nicht an dir genügen ließe und –" "Aber liebe Alida, ich bitte dich!" Valeska war hastig von dem Gitter zurückgetreten, und ihre Stimme klang sehr empört. "Wie kannst du den Respekt so aus den Augen setzen, daß du solche Sachen auch nur denken magst!" (LS, pp. 91-2)

The imagery of the "Gitter" here symbolises the fate to which Valeska would consign Alida, but not herself: the mental and spiritual imprisonment of living with a husband unable to provide respect and companionship on equal terms. While the theme of

sexual double standards here portrays Valeska's inconsequentiality as both ineffectual and incongruous, however, her sphere of action is not, ultimately, confined to situations which render her harmless.

The narrative crisis is foreshadowed by the theme that affability is an unreliable guide to character. Thus that Valeska is "immer gutmütig und immer bereit, andre Leute zu bedauern" is contingent on the fact that "es [...] ihr im Leben immer gut ergangen [war]; ob sie bei ernsten Sorgen ihre ruhige Gleichmäßigkeit behalten hätte, wußte kein Mensch zu sagen" (LS, p. 84). The novel title connotes the idea that suffering, as metaphorical "Schatten", is functional to the development of maturity, which Valeska lacks: "sie hatte es sehr gern, wenn man sie noch als ein Kind behandelte" (LS, p. 91). Her self-image as refined and educated (cf. LS, p. 143) is resolutely satirised as out of keeping with reality. Thus she counsels her ten-year-old daughter Ilse not to heed appearances because "ein guter Mensch ist immer schön", speaking with a voice that was "gerührt", as always "wenn sie einige nichtssagende Worte sprach" (LS, p. 105). Yet on the same occasion, she exasperates the child with her reluctance to receive Tine Hauberg on account of the latter's use of the local dialect, which is "entsetzliches Deutsch" (LS, p. 106). Realising the need to placate her daughter, however, she acquiesces:

"Ich gehe schon mit dir, Liebling, du darfst nur nicht traurig werden! Aber allzuviel an andre Menschen denken mußt du auch nicht! Alle Not auf Erden können wir doch nicht ändern, und wir haben auch unsre schweren Sorgen!" Ilse nickte. "Ja, ich weiß! Mit dem Bazar, und neulich wollte deine Taille nicht sitzen, und du weintest! Wir haben alle unsern Packen zu tragen; bei dem einen sieht man es, und bei dem andern sieht man es nicht. So sagt die alte Tine, und nun sage ihr guten Abend!" Frau Bardenfleth hatte eine instinktive Scheu, mit den Leuten aus der niedern Klasse zu verkehren, und da sie gerade mit Alida über einige neue Kleider gesprochen hatte, so fand sie diese Störung grausam. (LS, p. 108)

The humorously portrayed counsel against compassion from mother to daughter takes on darker connotations, as previously noted, in respect of her expectation that the city's poor should drink tap water that was poisoned because they are used to it (cf. LS, pp. 144-5). This callous oblivion does not signify deliberate cruelty, rather, it is rooted in her

determination to relegate life's "Schatten" to others and to preserve for herself only its "Licht". This determination, further, rests on her resolute abnegation of personal engagement and responsibility:

Nach ihrer Ansicht war alles gut, was in Hamburg war; und wenn die Katholiken an den unfehlbaren Papst glauben, so glaubte sie an den unfehlbaren Senat von Hamburg. (LS, p. 167)

Narratorial censure of this trait is extreme: it causes a mentally rigid frame of reference, on account of which Valeska spurns her physician's advice to take Ilse to the nearby Altona hospital when the latter is diagnosed with a dangerous tumour on her spine:

Laß mich mit Ilse nach Altona fahren, bat Alida mit weißen Lippen. Die Ärzte sollen so gut im Krankenhaus sein, und die Einrichtungen auch! Aber Valeska rang nur noch erregter die Hände. Bitte nicht nach Altona! Was weiß ich von Altona und seinem Krankenhause! Altona ist doch nur ein Dorf gegen Hamburg! Nach Hamburg soll sie, und ich allein bringe sie hin! (LS, p. 174)

Valeska's continued, studied ignorance of the cholera outbreak makes her oblivious that the new "Eppendorf" hospital in Hamburg was being overwhelmed by cholera admissions (cf. LS, pp. 177-80). Niese's story-telling art is at its most effective during this narrative crisis. As the equipage drives "durch die berühmten Alleen von Harvestehude", an increasingly internalised perspective is enlisted:

Was war das für ein Riesenfuhrwerk, das so hart an dem herrschaftlichen Wagen vorüberfuhr, daß er ihn fast streifte? Frau Valeska sah unwillig und dann ungläubig aus dem Fenster. Waren es wirklich Särge, die an ihr vorbeigefahren waren, und was sollte mit ihnen geschehen? [...] Der Wagen hielt an, fuhr einige Schritte weiter und hielt wieder an. Valeska öffnete die große Spiegelscheibe des Rücksitzes und fragte den Kutscher, was das alles bedeute. Er schüttelte finster den Kopf. "Wenn ichs man wüßte, Frau Bardenfleth! Aber das ist ja wohl –" er stockte und wurde aschgrau im Gesicht. Im schnellsten Trabe versuchte ein kleiner Wagen an der Equipage vorbeizukommen. Er war gelb lackiert, und das Wort: Feine Konditorwaren prangte in großen schwarzen Lettern auf seinen Seiten. Die nach hinten gehende Thür war aber geöffnet, und man sah zwei Menschen in ihm liegen. Der eine glitt bei der schnellen Bewegung des Gefährts halb aus dem Wagen, und seine Beine berührten fast die Erde. Er schien es aber nicht zu fühlen. (LS, p. 176-7)

By the time mother and daughter arrive at the hospital, Ilse is unconscious from exhaustion. Arrival, after a traumatic and prolonged journey, is abrupt: the child is manhandled from the carriage and rushed into the hospital by a "Mann, aus dessen jugendlichen Zügen Überanstrengung und Erschöpfung sprachen" without her name

being registered, to be lost amid the cholera admissions that overwhelmed the hospital at the peak of the epidemic (cf. LS, p. 178).<sup>141</sup> Thus Valeska's superficiality and lack of discrimination are not treated simply as facetious traits but are highlighted as serious character flaws, which can prove fateful in a crisis. This protagonist, therefore, as irritant within the Bardenfleth family, provides insights into readily apprehendable positive values by contrast. Thus the idea of discrimination garnered from experience, met with integrity operates implicitly against her use of proverbs, as pseudo-wisdom which is "nichtssagend". She likewise signals other values by contrast: steadfastness, depth, philanthropy, modesty, and perhaps most above all, moral responsibility are configured simultaneously as traditional and as crucial, since the narrative depicts crisis at two levels.

A further notable insight afforded through Valeska is a peripheral but differentiated depiction of philanthropy and patronage. Valeska wants an "Ölbild" because it would fit nicely into her Rococo room (LS, p. 89), whereas Julius's culturedness is presented in terms of a symbiotic combination of trade and *Bildung*:

Wohl legte er Wert auf seinen Reichtum; aber nur in dem Sinne, daß er ihm zu edeln Genüssen verhelfen sollte. Der brutale Luxus, mit dem so mancher Empörkommling prunkte, widerte ihn an; aber mancher Künstler in Deutschland nannte seinen Namen mit Achtung und Ehrerbietung. Manches Meisterwerk hing in seinen Zimmern, und seine offene Hand wurde von etlichen vergnügten aber armen Kunstjüngern eifrig in Anspruch genommen. Es fiel aber Bardenfleth nicht ein, auf seine Freigiebigkeit stolz zu sein. (LS, pp. 94-5)

The "vornehme Genuß des Reichtums" additionally entails personal qualities of modesty, refinement, and moderation, as well as generosity as duty: "er gehörte noch zu den alten Hamburgern [...] die es von ihren Eltern und Großeltern her nicht anders kannten, als daß sie von ihrem Gelde denen, die nichts haben, ein Teil abgeben müssen" (LS, p. 95). Two observations are pertinent in respect of this depiction. The

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<sup>141</sup> In her memoir, Niese relates how this narrative circumstance had been inspired by a real-life event: "Damals erschütterte mich besonders das Schicksal einer Familie draußen an der Elbe. Ihr Kind war an Diphtheritis erkrankt und der Arzt [...] riet der Mutter, ihr Kind ins Eppendorfer Krankenhaus zu schicken. Er wußte nicht, daß gerade an diesem Tage der Ansturm auf das Eppendorfer Krankenhaus ein so ungeheuerlicher, unerwarteter war, daß sowohl die Ärzte wie die Wärter den Kopf verloren. So kam es, daß dies Kind wohl eingeliefert wurde, daß ein Wärter es auf den Arm nahm und ins Haus trug; daß es aber niemals wiederkehrte. [...] Als ich dann meinen Roman *Licht und Schatten* schrieb, habe ich in Ilse Bardenfleth dies Schicksal zu schildern versucht [...]. (Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, pp. 223-4.)

first concerns its religious referentiality, and the second concerns the narratorial commentary on the cultural status of Hamburg.

The portrayal of Julius's perception of wealth in terms of an inherent charitable obligation, though somewhat didactically presented, was not the result of authorial wishful thinking or of a type of utopian nostalgia. Rather, it reflects a value-system commensurate with Hamburg's traditional official denomination: Lutheranism had been the official religion since 1529.<sup>142</sup> A brief excursion into the conceptual legacy that is here implicit may help to elucidate the world-view which underpins the depiction. Max Weber highlights that a crucial aspect of Martin Luther's radical religious reforms had been the conceptual transformation from the Catholic "doctrine of *deo placere vix protest* (the merchant cannot be pleasing to God)" to "the ordering of activity oriented purely to profit under the category of a 'calling', to which the person felt an obligation".<sup>143</sup> According to Weber, Luther's "*this-worldly* work in a vocation appears to him to be a visible expression of brotherly love",<sup>144</sup> to intimate the notion of charity as a cornerstone of the new, pragmatically orientated religion. Lutheran-derived Pietism, via Philipp Jakob Spener and August Hermann Francke, was among the conceptual precedents of a gradually developing Protestant cultural and work ethic. The philanthropic cultural activism<sup>145</sup> of these Lutheran pastors constitutes an approach discernible also in historic Hamburg. According to Jenkins, before the establishment of state cultural ministry after the first World War,

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<sup>142</sup> Cf. for instance, Jennifer Jenkins. *Provincial Modernity. Local Culture and Liberal Politics in Fin-De-Siecle Hamburg*. London/Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003, p. 43. Cf. also Schramm, *Hamburg und die Welt*, p. 17.

<sup>143</sup> Max Weber. (Stephen Kalberg transl). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. California: Roxbury, 2002, pp. 33, 35.

<sup>144</sup> Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, p. 40.

<sup>145</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch describes its manifestations: "From 1695, Francke created at Halle an extraordinary complex of orphanage, medical clinic, schools for both poor children and young noblemen and a teacher-training college, complete with printing press, library and even a museum to demonstrate to the pupils the wonders of God's creation. [...] Francke's principle was that everyone, whatever their position in life, should come out of childhood education able to read the Bible and to take pride in at least one special skill." (Diarmaid MacCulloch. *A History of Christianity*. London: Penguin, 2010, p. 740.)

the largest middle-class association in the city, the Patriotic Society of 1765, played such an active role in promoting civic culture that Alfred Lichtwark called it a 'voluntary cultural ministry.'<sup>146</sup>

Francke's cultural activism has also been noted for its conceptual permeability – his strong emphasis on charity, general welfare and education<sup>147</sup> received a "sympathetic hearing from the monarchs of the house of Hohenzollern"<sup>148</sup> on account of its "openness to crossing the Lutheran-Reformed divide". Cultural hybridisation, communication and compromise likewise figures largely in the gradual development of a general Protestant cultural and work ethic, which, notwithstanding denominational differences, shares the basic "*this-worldly*" orientation that permits of profit-making. Weber observes further that

the struggle between the desires of the flesh and the attachment to external goods was *not*, as the Puritans explicitly attest [...] a struggle against rational *acquisition*; rather, it challenged the irrational use of possessions.<sup>149</sup>

The cultural malaise observed in *Licht und Schatten* can be seen as at base a spiritual crisis. While the Protestant cultural and work ethic is not readily deconstructed into denomination-specific components, Lutheran specificity can perhaps be said to continue in Julius Bardenfleth's material support of young struggling artists, which echoes Francke's founding of a "library and [...] museum to demonstrate to the pupils the wonders of God's creation" as well as the priorities of the Patriotic Society, while Weber points out that the Puritan ethic rather demands the "rational and utilitarian use of wealth on behalf of the basic needs of the person and the community".<sup>150</sup> On the other hand, a further shared factor is the "notion of 'comfort'", which for the "Puritans encompasses the realm of the ethically permissible use of goods", while in the context of the Hamburg patriciate being seen simply as a positive value, evident in the Bardenfleths' small social gatherings, which are "behaglich" (LS, p. 133), and the juxtaposition between materialistically derived elegance, which is "steif und vornehm",

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<sup>146</sup> Jenkins, *Provincial Modernity*, p. 41.

<sup>147</sup> Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, pp. 115-6.

<sup>148</sup> MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity*, p. 740.

<sup>149</sup> Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, p. 115.

<sup>150</sup> Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, p. 115.

and traditional demeanours (cf. LS, p. 286). Likewise, the “ideal of the clean and solid comfort of the middle-class home” is the counterpoint of the “brutale Luxus” which “widerte [Julius] an” (LS, p. 95), while also being a Puritan priority.

Beyond the spiritual heritage implicit in *Licht und Schatten*, the novel takes issue with the cultural status of Hamburg in Julius Bardenfleth’s patronage of the arts, which also finds corroboration in contemporaneous accounts. The city’s famous “Direktor der Kunsthalle”,<sup>151</sup> Alfred Lichtwark, for instance wrote in 1897 that in Hamburg, culture and art was “die Sache der Bürger”.<sup>152</sup> Jennifer Jenkins notes that “private ownership was the rule of the day, and many of Hamburg’s museums found their first incarnation in the galleries [...] of citizens”<sup>153</sup> while Schramm provides the first-hand account that “bereitwillig stiftete mein Vater eine Summe, als Lichtwark Geld für irgendeinen Ankauf brauchte.”<sup>154</sup> The differentiation in *Licht und Schatten* between genuine patronage and dilettantism therefore also addresses the “slur that began with Heinrich Heine and became common currency” among nineteenth-century writers who lampooned the city as being composed of “merchants and philistine ‘beefsteak eaters’ whose only concern about art was its value as an investment.”<sup>155</sup> In this respect, it is also pertinent that Valeska is portrayed in terms of the psychological consequences of materialistic priorities. As already noted, she is appended to the patriciate. Percy Schramm notes that “nur auf das Geld Erpichte hat es zu allen Zeiten in allen Ständen gegeben, daher auch in Hamburg, auch unter den Kaufleuten – unter den Menschen, in deren Mitte ich aufwuchs, überwogen die anderen”,<sup>156</sup> to imply that while both orientations existed within this class, the latter predominated. In *Licht und Schatten*, Valeska does not cease on this account to be a “Hamburgerin” by temperament. For instance, it is the antagonistic combination of her exclusivity and independence, as well as her ignorance, which lead her to discard the doctor’s advice to take her daughter to Altona.

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<sup>151</sup> Schramm, *Neun Generationen*, p. 441.

<sup>152</sup> Alfred Lichtwark. *Hamburg: Niedersachsen*. Dresden: Küthmann, 1897, p. 51.

<sup>153</sup> Jenkins, *Provincial Modernity*, p. 43.

<sup>154</sup> Schramm, *Neun Generationen*, p. 441.

<sup>155</sup> Jenkins, *Provincial Modernity*, p. 39.

<sup>156</sup> Schramm, *Neun Generationen*, p. 441.

This combination, arguably, encapsulates the patrician mentality. It is shared by the Doktorin – when Ilse is lost in the hospital “konnte sie die laute Verzweiflung der Eltern nicht begreifen, wie sie sich auch kein Bild davon zu machen vermochte, daß Ilse in dem Krankenhause nicht gut aufgehoben sei” (LS, p. 180). As previously observed, complacency plays its fateful role across this stratum in the late nineteenth century. While the observations here offered in respect of the Hamburg bourgeoisie are intended to explore some of the preoccupations and values that constellate regional temperament in the given socio-historic context, this portrayal is incomplete without a consideration of the other social strata of the city, as well as some of the notable protagonist-groupings of the novel, who will therefore form the next focus.

#### Peripheral Ambivalence: Angestellte

Dittrich observes that *Angestellte* progressed from social periphery to significance in less than forty years as a result of the “Entwicklung zu einer einheitlichen sozialen Schicht”:

Während [der Angestelltenschaft] zur Zeit der Reichsgründung noch gar kein soziales Gewicht zukam, stellte sie in den letzten Jahren vor dem Weltkrieg mit mehr als 2 Millionen Erwerbstätigen... bereits eine beachtenswerte gesellschaftliche Macht dar.<sup>157</sup>

The depiction of the *Angestellten*-milieu as both socially peripheral yet pivotal in business is therefore a pertinent narratorial perception. Adrian Schläger's lack of capital initially posits his worth within the Bardenfleth business in terms of attitude, aptitude and education; Julius Bardenfleth accepts him on the basis of personal merit (cf. LS, pp. 66-70, 370-73). The ultimate agenda in respect of *Angestellte* proceeds in line with the spiritual ethos of the novel, with emphasis on professional demeanour. Ambivalent potential is highlighted through the juxtaposition of Adrian and Hüffer, as

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<sup>157</sup> Manfred Dittrich. *Die Entstehung der Angestelltenschaft*. Stuttgart/Berlin: Kohlhammer, p. 176.



previously indicated. The difference between them becomes evident when Lindberg senior's wrath against Julius on account of the broken engagement between their respective offspring manifests as a relentless and increasingly successful campaign by the former to damage the Bardenfleth business. This narrative turn is notable in regional terms – Augustine notes that “friendships between businessmen were of key importance in the Hanseatic cities.” They served to “minimize competition” and to “make it possible to arrive at agreements.”<sup>158</sup> As Bardenfleth ultimately faces bankruptcy, the monied but morally average Hüffer, as friend of the Lindbergs, condones the process by gleefully commenting in a letter to Lindberg junior, Oskar that “bei Bardenfleth scheint es stark zu rumpeln; ja, ja, wer nicht hören will, muß fühlen!” (LS, p. 297). This chameleon-like, corruptible figure, who lacks identity, occurs in contrast with Adrian, whose loyalty arises from motivation in ethical action, the determinant of which is ‘the right thing to do within given circumstances’, as previously discussed in the context of Niese’s autobiographical sketches.<sup>159</sup> Thus his decision to use his unexpected acquisition of capital to save the Bardenfleth business is emphatically separated from his personal wishes, such as partiality for Alida, and contingent on the need of the moment, rather than on personal advantage, to constellate a notion of honour that has a wider transformative potential.

### *Facets of a Working Class: Domestic Servants, Schauerleute and Feral Environments*

The working class consists of a resident proletariat, of domestic servants and of a recently arrived or visiting contingent, made up of non-permanent casual labourers from rural regions. The first, in particular, is observed to include dissolute as well as functional characters, the second is similarly distinguished, although to a lesser degree. The third stratum, unsurprisingly, is not characterised by urban society in terms of its

<sup>158</sup> Augustine, *Patricians and Parvenus*, p. 192.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. “Autobiography as Heimatliteratur”, pp. 75-6.

expectations or way of life. The main representative of this stratum, Folkert Dierks, is one of the positive characters of the novel; the regionally specific urban mentality of Hamburg thus *is* juxtaposed with the simpler mentality attributed to the Holstein marshlander. The novel opens with his arrival in Hamburg to seek work, and closes with his ultimate return home, potentially to echo “the country innocent who comes unstuck in the big city [which is] a staple topos of *Trivialliteratur*.” However, akin to Clara Viebig, Niese overtly “asserts her distance from such writing through overt references to ‘penny dreadfuls’ as one of the many harmful addictions”<sup>160</sup> that are the result of the city’s burgeoning mass market (cf. LS, pp. 25, 43, 98). Like the other protagonists of *Licht und Schatten*, Folkert is a contradictory character, rather than a straightforward “country innocent”. He is relatively inaccessible because he is uneducated and notably inarticulate. Described in turn as boring, rude, dim-witted, compassionate, sharp-eyed, courageous and heroic (in both the traditional and self-sacrificial sense), he ultimately emerges as an individualistic and ethically-motivated character. When he experiences homesickness, he muses, “was wollte er in der Marsch? Die Mutter war tot, und Freunde hatte er nicht. Hamburg war auch gut” (LS, p. 51) to connote the isolation of a rural existence negatively, while Tine, his aunt, whose “Heimat” likewise is “Brunsbüttel”, is a well-acclimatised citizen of Hamburg, who disapproves of changes that have taken place in the marshland since she left it (cf. LS, p. 18). The working class therefore does not serve to achieve a simplistic idealisation of the country and simultaneous disavowal of the city as overarching narratorial message, as is often attributed to *Heimatkunst* narratives.

Bland, in turn, points out that the naturalistic bias of the combination facilitates “detailed depictions of everyday life, which revealed the individual as product of her ‘milieu’”.<sup>161</sup> The use of naturalistic genre conventions in *Licht und Schatten* are visible particularly in the narration of harrowing circumstances that arise from poverty, as well as in

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<sup>160</sup> Bland, “Clara Viebig”, p. 84. – It is worth noting that *Heimatliteratur* and *Trivialliteratur* are here assumed to be synonyms.

<sup>161</sup> Bland, “Clara Viebig”, p. 80.

consequence of the cholera outbreak. The moral and psychological degradation that can accompany poverty, for instance, appears not only in the brutish, alcoholic husband Rüppell who finds that “Weibers müssen Prügel haben, sonst thun sie nich gut” (LS, p. 62), but is acknowledged as a *formative* environmental factor in the child Male Schädlich’s approval of her surroundings. She does not attend school because her “Mamma mochte lieber daß ich bettelte, und wenn ich nix kriegte, haute sie mir! Sie konnte fein hauen!” (LS, p. 359), while her neighbourhood provides “Gemütlichkeit” in the form of “ein orrentliche Prügelei, oder ein Betrunknen [...] [und] Frauen [die] sich verzürnten!” (LS, p. 358). Inadequate proletarian housing is described in terms of “enge Straßen” and “alte und verfallene Häuser [...] die nur einen schmalen Strich Himmel sehen ließen”,<sup>162</sup> and which do not permit of children playing (LS, pp. 61-2), while rain water in the living room, in consequence of leaking roofs, instead causes diversion for them (cf. LS, p. 113). Depiction of the psychological issue that physical, and more specifically, emotional deprivation leads to peer and sibling acrimony, acquires pathos when two children “sich [...] geprügelt [hatten] und viel Lärm gemacht”, oblivious that the mother of one of them lies dying (LS, p. 114). Living conditions are Zola-esque,<sup>163</sup> as again focalised through Male’s perspective:

Die Bäckergezellen [siefen] ümmer in Mutter und mein Bett [...]. Wir lagen da in bis fünf Uhr morgens, und denn waren die Gesellens mit die Arbeit fertig. Denn gingen die in unser Bett, und wir mußten raus. In Winter war das hellschen kalt, und Mamma hat mir denn mannichmal bei die alte Frau untergesteckt, die nebenan slief. Die hatt bloß all die Katzens in Bett, un da war ich bange vor! (LS, p. 255)

A darkly humorous turn is added to this depiction of overcrowded living conditions by the addition that Male avoids waiting in the stairwell for daylight with her mother “weil daß Müllers Swein manchmal auskniff und denn die Treppe runterfiel” (LS, p. 255). Her description is greeted by disbelief:

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<sup>162</sup> A photograph of one such surviving “Gasse”, which bears out the accuracy of this description, appears in *Hamburg. Porträt einer Weltstadt*. (Cf. Hans Günther Freitag (ed.). *Hamburg. Porträt einer Weltstadt*. Hoffmann and Campe [1979], p. 25.)

<sup>163</sup> Proletarian conditions depicted in some of Emile Zola’s work are sordid, with poverty constellated as producing extremely degraded living conditions over the course of the narrative. (Cf. for instance, Emile Zola. *L’Assommoir*. Paris: Maropn&Flammarion, 1878; Emile Zola. *Germinal*. Paris: Charpentier, 1885.)

Aber, Kind doch! Da wird doch in Hamburg auf die Etasche kein ein Mensch ein Schwein halten! Lüg man nich so gräßlich!" sagte Folkert ärgerlich. Die Kleine sah ihn ganz erstaunt an. Abersten Unkel! Warum sollten sie das denn nich thun, wo es doch so profitlich is? (LS, p. 255)

Naïve narration, which here focuses on the amorality of supplementing a meagre income, is juxtaposed with the Holstein peasant's expectation, both of a decent living standard and of responsible animal husbandry. Niese affirms the actuality of the conditions related by Male:

Es gab auch noch eigenartige Wohnungen, von denen der hohe Senat nichts ahnte. Wohnungen in Kasematten, tief unter der Erde, wo auch Hühner und Schweine gehalten wurden. Man entdeckte Ziegen und Schweine hoch unter dem Dach von übervolkerten Wohnungen. Das alles kam natürlich erst später, als die Krankheit bekämpft war, zum Vorschein [...].<sup>164</sup>

While observing the primacy of the social environment as formative influence in Male, through Folkert's simple expectation, *Licht und Schatten* emphatically avoids a studiously neutral stance.<sup>165</sup> While a naturalistic orientation here predominates, it does not function as the overriding narratorial technique. Rather, stylistic hybridisation remains apparent. That the consequently modified portrayal of proletarian reality is capable to configuring pathos will subsequently become clear.

As previously alluded to, the proletariat does not appear only in vilified form but includes positive representatives, such as the "Putzigs", who are shown in terms of hardship and conformity:

Da is der Vater seit den vorigen Herbst krank, und Frau Putzig muß den ganzen Tag waschen, wenn sie das trockne Brot for die Kleinens haben will! Die streiken nich – liebe Zeit, nein! Abers Rüppell, der is nur vergnügt, wenn er streiken und denn auf die Reichen schimpfen kann! (LS, p. 18)

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<sup>164</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 215.

<sup>165</sup> The success of authors of Naturalist texts to construct neutrality is itself dubious, as Furst and Skrine observe: "Essentially scientific and rational in character, [naturalism] was anti-aesthetic and anti-romantic." However, "in actual fact Naturalism was never as rational or as logically consistent as it may at first seem. The second half of the nineteenth century was a time of bewildering contradictions, of which Naturalism had its fair share. It was [...] torn between its theory and its practice, between materialism and idealism, between pessimism and optimism. On the one hand it faced the iniquities of a rapidly industrialized (polluted) world while on the other it placed boundless faith in the future progress of that world with the help of scientific advance." Due to its inconsistencies, "many critics would subscribe to McDowall's curt condemnation of 'the naturalistic fallacy', namely, the confusion of art with science." (Furst/Skrine, *Naturalism*, pp. 21-2.)

On the other hand, *Licht und Schatten* portrays social democracy in an unequivocally negative light in the Hamburg labour context. Folkert Dierks enquires of Frau Rüppell why striking dock labourers routinely assault substitute workers:

“Das ist doch natürlich. Damit die Baase nicht für den Lohn, den sie immer gezahlt haben, Arbeiter bekommen. Die Schauerleute müssen ihren Willen durchsetzen!”  
 “War der Lohn denn so schlecht?” Frau Rüppell lachte. “Du lieber Gott, gar zu schlecht war er ja nicht. Aber alles ist heutzutage teuer, und wenn man gut leben und auch sein bischen Vergnügen haben will, dann muß der Mann auch anständigen Verdienst haben [...] wenn man nicht mal in die Zentralhalle oder ins Variététheater gehen kann, dann ist beim Leben kein Spaß mehr! Da geben sie wirklich nette Stücke, und zum Herbst kommt Renz wieder, da müssen Sie mal hin! Gefällt mir besser als Zirkus Busch, nicht wahr, Tante Tine?” (LS, p. 16)

A rather dissolute impression emerges as Frau Rüppell here represents a section of the Hamburg proletariat, the “Schauerleute”,<sup>166</sup> the earning potential of which suffices for life’s necessities,<sup>167</sup> but not for its penchant for light entertainment, of which she is indicated to have considerable experience. Striking is therefore from the outset not acknowledged as an act of desperation, but rather as a wilful gesture, related to the wish for pleasure. Censure of the vogue for light entertainment similar to the Parisian “Théâtre des Variétés”<sup>168</sup> ensues through “Tante Tine”, who is the Rüppells’ neighbour.

<sup>166</sup> “Schauerleute” and “Baase” are given as Hamburg colloquial terms. The former designates “Arbeiter, die das Auf- und Abladen der Schiffe [...] besorgen”, while “der Schauerbaas nimmt die Arbeiter an und zahlt ihnen den Lohn aus” (LS, p. 16).

<sup>167</sup> According to Michael Grüttner, the earning potential of “Schauerleute” varied significantly in the 1890s. After a series of small-scale strikes, which had ended in the workers’ defeat, the “Staatskaiverwaltung [...] nutzte die schwache Position der Arbeiter auch zur Intensivierung des Arbeitsprozesses” and managed “auf allen Kaianlagen die Akkordarbeit für ‘feste’ Arbeiter einzuführen”, with the consequence that “die Klagen über zu langsames Arbeiten am Kai gänzlich verstummt” seien.” (Michael Grüttner, *Arbeitswelt an der Wasserkante*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 1984, p. 150.) While *Licht und Schatten* may underestimate worker exploitation by the “Baase”, as identified in Grüttner’s study, the novel’s observation that the earning potential relating to these workers was sufficient for a reasonable standard of living seems to be justified. Grüttner’s findings are, due to the complexity of factors involved, not conclusive: he notes, for instance, that “Schauerleute” form one of the dockworkers’ groups with the “höchsten Tagelöhne”, which, however, were “primär Kompensation der häufigen Arbeitslosigkeit” that was also a working condition of this trade. Grüttner notes a lack of reliable statistical data, observing that occurrences such as the “ungewöhnlich hohe Steigerung der Lebenshaltungskosten infolge des Zollanschlusses von 1888” and simultaneous “ungewöhnlich hohen Mietsteigerungen” in consequence of the “mit dem Freihafenbau verbundenen Wohnraumverknappung” are not acknowledged in existent statistical studies, which are, further, by virtue of selection “in keiner Weise repräsentativ.” (Grüttner, *Arbeitswelt an der Wasserkante*, p. 52.) However, he also highlights that “Gewerkschaft” agitation against worker exploitation, such as shifts lasting up to 72 hours, found opposition not only from an “Unternehmerschaft [...] die es oft verstand restriktive Maßnahmen zu unterlaufen”, but also from an “Arbeiterschaft” that resisted losing the opportunity “in vergleichsweise kurzer Zeit relativ viel Geld zu verdienen – für Nacht und Sonntagsarbeit wurden fast überall Lohnzuschläge gezahlt.” (Grüttner, *Arbeitswelt and der Wasserkante*, p. 59.) *Licht und Schatten*, arguably, underestimates the psychological effects of “überlange Perioden kräftezehrender Schwerstarbeit und ausgedehnte Zeiten der Muße” and the existence of such as everyday reality of “Schauerleute” (Grüttner, *Arbeitswelt and der Wasserkante*, p. 59), and may also overestimate the earning potential of labourers deemed sufficiently self-disciplined and hard-working.

<sup>168</sup> Ernst Günther refers to a “zweite Periode der deutschen Varietëgeschichte”, which commenced around 1880. In the 1880s and 1890s, “ein Haus nach dem andern öffnete seine Pforten”, two of the best-known of which were in Hamburg. Like in Paris, artistry “wurde zur reinen Ware auf dem kapitalistischen Markt

In this protagonist, traditionalist narrative features appear which are “far from disrupting prevalent stereotypes about domestic servants”.<sup>169</sup> She is a “true ‘Perle’ [who] is content to subordinate herself to her masters”<sup>170</sup> and who speaks to her ‘betters’ in an overtly self-deprecatory manner:

Gott o Gott, Herr Julius, was sind Sie doch gut! Und ümmer so freundlich! Als wenn ich Ihnen besuchen könnte, wo ich doch man so’n gewöhnliche alte Person bin und Sie so’n feinen Mann! Bescheidenheit muß sein, Herr Julius, sonst geht allens noch mehr drunter und drüber, als es nu schon thut. (LS, pp. 28-9)

Aside from providing an endorsement of hierarchical social relations, however, Tine is another character who emphasises intrinsic value, again to substantiate the novel’s critique of a materialistic, shallow orientation, perceived to affect all three societal strata adversely. As is the case with Adrian Schläger and Folkert Dierks, Tine has a profoundly transformative effect within the novel. Further, a sense of independence is attributed to her on account of a lack of compromise that characterises her motivations. Overall, a colourful portrayal of a partly functional, partly dysfunctional working class emerges, one, however, that bears witness to a consciously conservative narratorial gist.

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[...]. Die Nachfrage bestimmte den Preis”. Among the the consequences was that “unter dem Deckmantel von Vielfalt und Abwechslungsreichtum zogen Nervenkitzel und Sensationshascherei, vordergründige Erotisierung und primitive Vulgarisierung in die Artistik ein.” (Ernst Günther. *Geschichte des Varietés*. Berlin: Henschel, 1978, pp. 139, 141-2.) – The then recent fictional portrayal of the French Variété in Emile Zola’s *Nana* thematises the Parisian “Théâtre des Variétés” in terms of its power to reveal and release suppressed sexuality in both women and men. Sexuality is here depicted as an irrepressible instinct, which dwarfs morality, to pose a close association between sex and trade, a process symbolised in the power which the courtesan, or demi-mondaine “Nana”, who achieves fame in the Variété, has over men of all ages. (Cf. Emile Zola. *Nana*. Paris: Charpentier, 1880.) That such observations were not made in a bourgeois female author’s narrative is not surprising, since it would have compromised the author socially. The erotic attraction of the Variété, however, is thematised obliquely in the portrayal of the habits of the young male bourgeois generation in *Licht und Schatten*, as previously discussed in respect of Oskar Lindberg.

<sup>169</sup> Interestingly, this is also a feature of *Das tägliche Brot*, Cf. Bland, “Clara Viebig”, p. 84.

<sup>170</sup> Godela Weiss-Sussex. “Two Literary Representations of Maidservant Life in Early Twentieth-Century Berlin: Clara Viebig’s *Das tägliche Brot* (1901) and Georg Hermann’s *Kubinke* (1910)”, in: *German Life and Letters*. Vol. 51, No. (3 July 1998), p. 346.

A particular feminine focus is added through the character of Rose Valentin. Described as a strikingly beautiful proletarian girl who is employed in a shop – actually categorisable as one of the low types of *Angestellten*-positions – she attracts the attention of men, whom she exploits financially. Her emotional dysfunctionality becomes apparent when, hearing of her sister's death after having been unaware of the severity of the latter's condition, she responds to Folkert's offer to buy her a black dress for the funeral:

Gewiß [...] es ist traurig! Ihre Stimme klang gleichgiltig [...] Sie trug einen großen Strohhut, unter dem ihre Augen leuchtend hervorsahen. [...] Du bist ein guter Junge, Folkert, gib mir aber lieber eine neue helle Sommerjacke! Die habe ich nötiger! (LS, pp. 120-1)

Her craving for ease and luxury eventually prompts her to abandon Folkert, who woos her, as also Herr Rüppell, who forces his attentions on her upon his wife's death. She becomes Lindberg junior's second indiscretion, but is finally rejected by him on account of her excessive demands. After this rejection is followed by Rüppell's attempt to murder her in revenge for refusing him, she suffers a breakdown. If this chaotic progression were intended as narratorial censure, this is not realised: Rose's crime is an inability to feel emotional attachment or responsibility. Given that naturalistic genre conventions conspire to outline the psychological effects of environmental factors, her fixation on glamour and sensuality remains related to the deprivation – psychological and physical – that characterises her situation. Her behaviour therefore is symptomatic and compensatory, rather than being connoted in terms of depravity. This portrayal effects a covert social critique. Situated at the beginning of consumerism as well as of a rapid female influx into the white-collar workplace<sup>171</sup> in Germany, Rose seeks to secure her own living outside of the two constrictive options which her social sphere provides. Neither employment in manufacture, nor marriage and motherhood in poverty

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<sup>171</sup> Cf. Günther Schulz. *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 2000, p. 73. Cf. also, Roy Pascal. *From Naturalism to Expressionism. German Literature and Society 1880-1918*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973, p. 199.

appeal to her. She simultaneously responds to the fantasies of the new entertainment industry (cf. LS, p. 16) and to the egalitarian aspect of early mass production, which not only makes novelty more accessible to the poorer classes, but also produces continued desire through the notion of glamour, propagated by the new phenomenon of advertising.<sup>172</sup> It is the extent of Rose's fixation with novelty goods that reveals her impoverished self-worth as portrayed, for instance, in her hostile reaction to Folkert after he prevents her from being stabbed by Rüppel – she accuses Folkert of purloining of her new hat during the incident (LS, pp. 162-5). Her extreme emotional investment in the creation of an erotically appealing self-image conducive to securing the attention of an affluent man appears in much the same light. These traits, in combination with her emotional dysfunctionality, produce a stark psychological precursor to – and prognosis of – a type of pseudoemancipated working girl in the late Weimar Republic, who was to be similarly deprived and manipulated into desiring glamour in an illusory hope for redemption from banality, servility and squalor, while being destined for compromise at best, and the realisation of her fears at worst.<sup>173</sup>

While *Licht und Schatten* precedes direct or foregrounded portrayals of German female *Angestellte*, the narrative does tackle the preliminary agenda of constricted social potential. When Rose's rehabilitation fails, she sails off to America to become a society hostess – reported with little narratorial interference, in this case to recall a characteristic naturalistic intention:

[Her] behaviour can be understood [...] as little subject to moral judgement as the machine because it is similarly determined (by heredity, milieu and 'moment').<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> This phenomenon is left implicit in *Licht und Schatten*, but notably captured in contemporaneous narratives. (Cf. for instance, Emile Zola. *Zum Paradies der Damen*. Frankfurt: Fischer, 2010, pp. 49, 65, 96-111 and 141-44. Cf. Also, Max Freund. *Der Warenhauskönig*. Barmen: Eos, 1912, p. 36.)

<sup>173</sup> Cf. for instance, Rudolf Braune. *Das Mädchen an der Orga Privat*. Frankfurt: Societäts-verlag, 1930; Irmgard Keun. *Das kunstseidene Mädchen*. Berlin: Universitas, 1932; Christa Brück. *Schicksale hinter Schreibmaschinen*. Berlin: Sieben-Stäbe, 1930. – Unsurprisingly, the biases of these novels differ. Braune's has a strong Marxist focus and portrays the typists as highly manipulated by predatory Capitalist employers; Keun is concerned with the portrayal inner resilience and compromise in the face of implacable circumstances; Brück focuses on the victimisation of and attempted solidarity of young women. In all three, female protagonists are excessively preoccupied by their appearance, banalities and entertainment, to reflect a social context in which no other form of self-realisation is available.

<sup>174</sup> Furst and Skrine, *Naturalism*, p. 20.



Narratorial distancing here reinforces the character's ambivalent status, while peripherally, but arguably bravely, taking up the taboo subject of women's sexuality. Jackson summarises Chris Weedon's findings that a major obstacle regarding women's enfranchisement in society revolved around patriarchal psychological assumptions of ownership and control in this respect:

[...] in the period between 1890 and the outbreak of the First World War the possibilities of realising sexual feelings and desires were still circumscribed by dominant patriarchal social values which denied women the right to be both independent and sexual, inside and outside marriage.<sup>175</sup>

Pascal notes that sexual problems, inevitably perhaps, gave rise to the greatest difference of opinion in the *Frauenbewegung*, where "the main body sought to preserve the traditional ethos of the family, including premarital chastity and conjugal fidelity",<sup>176</sup> a point of societal rigidity that ignores female plight, including promiscuity or prostitution in the proletariat, even though this point had been made public in Bebel's *Die Frau und der Sozialismus* as early as 1879.<sup>177</sup> Rose must leave the confines of German society entirely in order to delimit her life from taboos regarding her sensuality, as well as to fulfil her material ambitions. Thus this character also challenges the narrative's overt value system in respect of women's status in society.

### *Imperilled Optimism: Children as Prognosis*

Three notable children appear in *Licht und Schatten*: Male Schädlich, Heine Rüppell and Ilse Bardenfleth. As the emergent generation, they symbolise new societal potential. Pathos develops from the fact that the former two are situated in environments too harmful to allow them to live. Their respective reactions to their situations differ, to hint at temperamental differences. Male's adjustment to squalor and

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<sup>175</sup> Chris Weedon, quoted in: David Jackson (ed.). *Taboos in German Literature*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996, p. 9.

<sup>176</sup> Pascal, *From Naturalism to Expressionism*, p. 206.

<sup>177</sup> Cf. August Bebel. *Die Frau und der Sozialismus*. Zürich-Hottingen: Volksbuchhandlung, 1879.

violence as norm is advanced, but her ability to respond with affection to those around her indicates a spirit that is not yet crushed. Her inability to convalesce after the cholera, in spite of this spirit, can be taken as symbolic of the impossibility to return to a life not worth living. Heine, on the other hand, whose temperament is akin to Bijard's daughter Lali,<sup>178</sup> inexplicably responds with patience to squalor, neglect and the violence of his demonic father until his death during the epidemic, which provides one of the novel's darkest moments (cf. LS, pp. 213-15). Social critique is encoded in the presentation of children who cannot thrive in the physical and psychological environment which the existing social structure forces on them.

Ten-year-old Ilse Bardenfleth, by contrast, functions as hypothetical positive future potential, including liberated femininity, one of the covert themes of the novel. Her characterisation, as well as her trajectory, is unusual: she is from the outset described as "eigenthümlich" (LS, p. 47) and is inappropriately treated as confidante by her mother Valeska. Yet she remains resistant to the latter's manipulations and demonstrates both clarity of thought and a marked capacity for empathy and compassion that cuts through the social classes (cf. LS, pp. 101-2). She is the sole voice intimating narratorial sympathy with the possibility of proletarian enfranchisement, occasioned by her first encounter with "Tante Tine":

Ilse hatte gleichfalls zugehört, und zwar mit angehaltenem Atem. Ihr kam es vor, als blicke sie in eine neue Welt, und diese Welt gefiel ihr. (LS, p. 102)

She internalises Tine's precepts regarding love and suffering and later forms a strong attachment to the garrulous proletarian child Male. Ilse's non-conformity of defined gender and class parameters is discussed by step-sister Alida and the Doktorin. Frau Bardenfleth senior's social conservatism is depicted as overly conservative and rigid:

"Papa sagt immer, er fürchte, sie werde noch einmal Medizin oder Philosophie oder irgend etwas andres Unweibliches studieren wollen!" "Da sei Gott vor!" rief die Doktorin entsetzt. "Eine Bardenfleth darf nicht daran denken so etwas Unerhörtes zu thun!" (LS, pp. 47-8)

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<sup>178</sup> Cf. Emile Zola. *L'Assommoir*. Paris: Maropn & Flammarion, 1878.

Additionally to being independent and individualistic, however, Ilse is frail, and a perpetual invalid on account of a tumour on her spine (cf. LS, pp. 97-8). Lost without identity during the crisis, she survives against all odds. While convalescing in a makeshift ward (cf. LS, pp. 252-57), she is subject both to extreme lethargy and to amnesia.<sup>179</sup> Sub-textually, this character therefore provides the figurative commentary that the potential of liberated femininity is confronted with seemingly insurmountable obstacles, a depiction that is incidentally commensurate with Niese's own life experience. Yet significantly, Ilse ultimately does find release from these traumatic circumstances, to act as symbol of a spirit that must live, for a life worth living to manifest.

#### *A Gendered Discourse: Iconoclasts Below the Threshold*

As previously alluded to, Folkert Dierks is one among several of the novel's "moralisch handelnden Menschen". Due to this attribute, he is presented as equal to the urban heroes, while diverging from them in terms of education and social grace. His equals in terms of personal integrity and vigour are Julius, Alida, Adrian and Tine – as already observed, no overall hero is constructed. A subliminal configuration of foundational societal change, however, is constellated combinedly through Folkert and Rose.

Folkert is an ambiguous protagonist in spite of his rural simplicity; he remains relatively inaccessible due not only to being uneducated, but also notably inarticulate. Thus in turn he appears as boring, rude, dim-witted, compassionate, sharp-eyed, courageous and heroic (in both the traditional and self-sacrificial sense). He undertakes heavy manual labour but remains disidentified from the proletariat because he neither joins

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<sup>179</sup> Niese recalls taking part in a "Verein, der den Hinterbliebenen der an der Cholera Gestorbenen hilfreiche Hand leistete [...]". Ich bin dann später auch nach Hamburg in das Waisenhaus gefahren, wo man die Kinder hingebracht hatte, die ihre Eltern verloren hatten und die so sehr verstört waren, daß sie ihre Namen nicht mehr wußten. Die Kinder waren zum Teil selbst krank gewesen und hatten ihr Gedächtnis verloren, das nur langsam wiederkehrte." (Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, pp. 220-1.)

their strike nor becomes a social democrat,<sup>180</sup> rather, he remains free both from a radicalised attitude and from his aunt's servility. More importantly, however, through Folkert, *Licht und Schatten* presents one of two characters who are unable to function within the existing social system. The impossibility of his union with Rose is *overtly* due to her dysfunctionality. Subtextually, however they respectively represent diametrically opposed needs, created by a polarised socio-political definition of gender. The situation is resolved in an inversion of traditional assumptions about archetypal gendered needs: in the context of the narrative, Rose ultimately requires expanded horizons and adventure to survive, whereas Folkert craves a home to tend, as well as proximity to nature.

Elizabeth Boa deems a sustained synthesis of *Heimatliteratur* and Naturalism to constitute a distinctive contribution, one that functions as an approximation of a "modernist aesthetic" that "mutually estrange[s] the scientific milieu study *and* the poetic vision of nature", and which reveals both as "rhetorically driven discourses open to question."<sup>181</sup> This summary suits *Licht und Schatten*, in which conscious and subtextual currents function autonomously, and to some extent paradoxically counter to each other. The refinement of traditional values takes place at a conscious, overt narrative level. The positively-connoted protagonists correspond with Otto Heller's notion of the achievement of bourgeois authors, or "geistvolle Frauen", whose aim is the "Kräftigung der idealistischen Triebe aller Menschen ohne Unterschied des Geschlechts", rather the "direkte Beteiligung an der Frauenbewegung".<sup>182</sup> Beneath the surface, however, a more destabilising gist occurs in a symbolic, fundamental re-evaluation of gender.

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<sup>180</sup> Narrative apprehension about the radical political left is focused on the character of Herr Rüppell, who "war es gewohnt, in einem kleinen Kreise seiner Wirtshaus- und Hafenbekanntschaften das große Wort zu führen" (LS, p. 55) and who becomes more demonic as social and personal crises cause progressive psychic disintegration, rather than summoning moral courage in him. From the outset, he makes nonsensical and preposterous demands that are only ostensibly representative of social democrat ideology, and which are a cover for his abnegation of personal responsibility (cf. LS, p. 57).

<sup>181</sup> Elizabeth Boa/Rachel Palfreyman. *Heimat. A German Dream. Regional Loyalties and National Identity in German Culture 1890-1990*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 42.

<sup>182</sup> Otto Heller. "Die deutsche Schriftstellerin von gestern und heute", in: *Pädagogische Monatshefte*, Vol. 4, No. 8/9, 1903, p. 257.

## Luise Westkirch's "Gretchens Liebhaber": Social Critique in *Die Gartenlaube*

### *Die Gartenlaube as Late Nineteenth-Century Publication Context for Socially Engaged Fiction*

The common contemporary perception of *Die Gartenlaube* is that of a family-orientated magazine which supplied conservative, domestic and sentimental material, and which therefore was a sponsor of authors who incorporated existing power relations more than they resisted them.<sup>1</sup> The previously discussed narrative "Geburtstag" by Charlotte Niese appeared in this magazine in 1893 and, as has been shown, it subtly constructs resistant practice through its regional specificity. It does not, however, offer direct social critique. "Geburtstag" is also one of the most uncontentious stories in *Aus dänischer Zeit*, and its choice for publication in this magazine could therefore be interpreted as confirmation of editorial stricture – one wonders whether Niese's approach formed the limit of challenge that could be posed by authors. Luise Westkirch's story, however, notwithstanding its innocuous title does set out to issue social critique overtly.

"Gretchens Liebhaber" was the first of her narratives to be serialised in *Die Gartenlaube*.<sup>2</sup> By 1892, she was already known for her naturalistic novellas, in

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<sup>1</sup> Ruth Ellen Boetcher Joeres applies this phrase to writers such as Marlitt: "power may lead to resistance, but it can also be heeded and complied with, even underwritten. Marlitt herself, not just her fictional characters, appears to have incorporated more than she has resisted." (Ruth Ellen Boetcher Joeres. *Respectability and Deviance. Nineteenth Century German Women Writers and the Ambiguity of Representation*. London/Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 227.)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Luise Westkirch. "Gretchens Liebhaber", in: *Die Gartenlaube*, Nos. 43-48, 1892. (Henceforth: GL) – An examination of all nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century volumes carrying narratives by Westkirch reveals that both length and presentational prominence increased over time. Beginning with novellas and *Erzählungen* consisting of two to six instalments embedded within the inside pages of the magazine from 1892 onwards, from 1901, full-length novels were serialised, interspersed with shorter narratives. In 1906 and 1912 these appeared on the front page along with the author's name as selling point for each volume up to the final instalment. (Cf. *Die Gartenlaube*. "Gretchens Liebhaber", Nos. 43-8, 1892; "Einmal zur rechten Zeit", Nos. 16-7, 1897; "Im Teufelsmoor", Nos. 16-23, 1901; "Der Waschbär", Nos. 20-1, 1902; "König Hass", Nos 4-16, 1904; "Kains Entsöhnung", Nos 22-35, 1906; "Das Höchste aber ist die Liebe", Nos 42-4, 1909; "Der Franzosenhof", Nos. 35-48, 1912.)

particular “Der rote Shawl” and “Die Basis der Pyramide”.<sup>3</sup> The former of these, which focuses on the proletarian and lowest *Angestellten*-tier, provides a counterpoint to the image of the ideal family by illustrating the abuse and exploitation that can take place within a familial setting. This story also provides stark critique of the religiosity of Protestant pastors and of the treatment of disability in contemporaneous society. “Die Basis der Pyramide” largely focalises the proletarian viewpoint to illustrate illusory status differences, injustices of the industrial milieu and the desperation that can occur in the proletarian environment. “Der rote Shawl” led to Westkirch’s “Auszeichnung mit dem Ehrenpreis der *Wiener Allgemeinen Zeitung*” and to her position as “Mitarbeiterin der Zeitschriften *Nord und Süd* und *Deutsche Revue*.”<sup>4</sup> Her author profile is therefore very different from that of the previously discussed skilled and at times iconoclastic *Heimatsdichterin* Niese. “Gretchens Liebhaber” has been chosen for its publication in *Die Gartenlaube*, as well as for its focus on the new middle class, particularly of commercial *Angestellte*, who are aligned with the bourgeoisie. Notably, it features both male and female *Angestellte*. An important aspect of the reading that follows will be to examine the thematic content and stylistic devices of this narrative in terms of the type and extent of critique it offers in the light of this publication environment.

*Die Gartenlaube* has previously been introduced in terms of its politically engaged, liberal beginnings in the mid nineteenth century. After Ernst Keil’s death in 1878, the lessening of its social engagement “Anfang der 1880er Jahre”, led to content that was

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<sup>3</sup> “Der rote Shawl” first appeared as part of a collection of narratives in 1888; “Die Basis der Pyramide” likewise initially appeared as part of a set in 1891. (Cf. Luise Westkirch. *Rauch: Sechs Novellen aus dem Alltagsleben*. Berlin: Alexander Duncker, 1888; Luise Westkirch. *Die Basis der Pyramide und andere Novellen*. Berlin: Alexander Duncker, 1891.) – These two narratives were subsequently published combinedly. (Cf. Luise Westkirch. *Die Basis der Pyramide. Der rote Shawl*. Leipzig: Reclam, 1902.)

<sup>4</sup> Cf. “Westkirch, Luise”, in: <<http://www.zvab.com/Westkirch-Luise/60403906/buch>>. Accessed 5 Oct 2013. – Katrin Kohl provides an insight into the periodical *Nord und Süd* by citing a letter from Theodor Fontane to its editor, in which he seeks publication in this magazine in preference to *Die Gartenlaube*: “Ueberhaupt ist ‘Nord und Süd’... in seinem Ton und seinem Publikum für mich am günstigen gelegen;... sein Publikum ist berlinisch, residenzlich, großstädtisch [...]” (Kohl, “E. Marlitt’s Bestselling Poetics”, in: Charlotte Woodford/Benedict Schofield (eds). *The German Bestseller in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Rochester: Camden House, 2012, p. 198.)

“zum Teil realitätsfremd” and which “beschönigen die tatsächliche Situation”.<sup>5</sup> Kirsten Belgum refutes the interpretation of some twentieth-century critics that the magazine was “the epitome of kitsch” or even a carrier of a “dangerously idealizing mentality” that was petit-bourgeois, reactionary and “a precursor to the nationalist and domestic ideology of National Socialism”.<sup>6</sup> She instead notes the coexistence of nostalgia and modernity in *Die Gartenlaube* during the final decades of the century and interprets this admixture in terms of collective psychological ambivalence and need:

Increasingly, the images the magazine gave its readers and viewers projected a nostalgia for an earlier era, a simpler time in which life was not complicated by technological progress, urbanization, and the complex issues of later nineteenth-century global politics. In other words, these images presented an antidote to the magazine’s discussion of industrialization and modernization in Germany, even as they appeared next to them. This is not to suggest that images of premodern identity were meant to overshadow a modern conception of the nation. Rather, their presence could continually reassure the magazine’s readers that despite the pace of social change, the nation was a familiar, traditional place. As the older geographical presentation of German regions had presented an outline of the German nation, these later nostalgic images were all about negotiating modern identities and articulating an ambivalence to change.<sup>7</sup>

This acknowledgement of a paradoxical co-existence of antithetical factors as psychologically vital in the late nineteenth century serves as a reminder that historical reality can be at odds with retrospective projections. It is an aspect worth bearing in mind when interpreting the thematic material of literary texts appearing in *Die Gartenlaube* during the latter part of the nineteenth century. In order to ask whether or how *Gretchens Liebhaber* reflects such ambivalence, it is helpful to pinpoint as accurately as possible how this text is situated within the magazine’s trajectory. Both the liberal maxim that had served as the magazine’s overall orientation over the decades, and the juxtapositional approach, which supported psychological adjustment in the presence of accelerated social change, can be observed to fail at the end of the century:

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<sup>5</sup> “Entstehung und Entwicklung der ‘Gartenlaube’”, in: Cornelia Breml/Barbara Cahn-Wegmann et.al. (eds.) *Kabinett für sentimentale Trivialliteratur. Über Frauenliteratur von der französischen Revolution bis zur Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Zürich: University of Zürich, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Kirsten Belgum. *Popularizing the Nation: Audience, Representation and the Production of Identity in Die Gartenlaube, 1853-1900*. Lincoln/London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998, p. 183. – Belgum here refers to Hermann Glaser’s interpretation in particular.

<sup>7</sup> Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation*, p. 171.

In the final years of the century, however, this unifying project became more difficult to sustain. The idea of the German nation became increasingly complex and conflicted. [...] In this period of increasing social fragmentation and political tension, the magazine struggled to find a mixture of modern and nostalgic images that could enable its readers to negotiate a modern social identity [...] The *Gartenlaube*'s sentimental images of the nation [...] reveal the complexity of the task of representing the nation. These apparently trivialized views of Germanness at the close of the century must be seen in the context of the magazine's history and the other images it continued to produce.<sup>8</sup>

The timing of a sustained decline in circulation figures from the turn of century onwards is of interest, whether attributable to an increasing collective perception of inadequate representation or to structural changes in the press landscape.<sup>9</sup> In effect, it suggests that after a period of fluctuation, it was at this point that a lasting societal change occurred, because a previously identified demographic ceased to exist as such. In view of its previous "intimate connection to its readership",<sup>10</sup> the decline can be deemed to support the hypothesis that significant perceptual changes which occurred, or began to predominate around the turn of century, had not yet taken a firm hold in the early mid-nineties, the time of publication of *Gretchens Liebhaber*. These observations about demographic, editorial remit and trajectory of *Die Gartenlaube* may serve as an initial insight into both the narrative scope and impact of this narrative.

For the purposes of this study, the potential reception of "Gretchens Liebhaber" as a *literary* text in this magazine is also pertinent: had *Die Gartenlaube* been perceived simply as a source of conceptually unchallenging narratives, then its narratives would have been unlikely to be sought out by attentive and perceptive readers. Yet the magazine's overall literary landscape had always been more varied than is generally

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<sup>8</sup> Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation*, pp. 183-4.

<sup>9</sup> Belgum lists contemporaneously ascendant publications, such as a "new genre of cultural magazines, women's magazines, and illustrated weeklies", none of which "even tried to appeal to the entire family as their reading audience." (Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation*, pp. 185-7.) That one of the most successful ascendant periodicals was the "liberal organ of political satire, *Simplicissimus*" (Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation*, p. 186) would suggest that dissatisfaction played a role as a factor – the fact that the family ceased to exist as targetable demographic group, on the other hand, may be taken to imply that a rising commodity-based consumer culture was effectively constructing individualism, which necessarily occurred at the expense of the *Familienblätter*.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Dieter Barth, *Zeitschrift für Alle - das Familienblatt im 19. Jahrhundert. Ein sozialhistorischer Beitrag zur Massenpresse in Deutschland*. Dissertation: Münster University, 1974, p. 37. Barth's attribution of "intimacy" is also borne out by Malgorzata Trifkovic, who notes: "Ein wichtiger Bestandteil des Blattes war der sogenannte 'Briefkasten', eine Rubrik, mit der die Redaktion einen engen Kontakt zu ihren Lesern pflegte und zugleich Diskussionen anregte." (Malgorzata Trifkovic, "Literatur in der 'Gartenlaube'", in: Dirk Hempel, *Literatur und bürgerliche Frauenbewegung im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik : Forschungsberichte und Studien*. Hamburg: Univ., Inst. für Germanistik II, 2010, p. 117.)



remembered. Roland Berbig and Bettina Hartz argue that received notions of its literary profile have become undifferentiated on account of a preceding one-sided research bias:

Schon wenige Autorennamen verdeutlichen, daß das Spektrum der *Gartenlaube* bei weitem anspruchsvoller war als die dominant trivialisierende Linie ihrer Rezeptionsgeschichte vermuten läßt: Berthold Auerbach, Paul Heyse, Adolf Wilbrandt, Friedrich Spielhagen und Wilhelm Raabe.<sup>11</sup>

In respect of Theodor Fontane, who published narratives in *Die Gartenlaube* until 1890, they note:

Wollte er sich als Schriftsteller gesellschaftliches Ansehen verschaffen, mußte er Zeitschriften auswählen, die seinen Ruf nicht gefährdeten. [...] 'Aus der Schüssel, aus der 300 000 Deutsche essen', schrieb er mit Blick auf seine Veröffentlichung von *Quitt* in der *Gartenlaube* und weiteren Publikationsplänen, 'ess' ich ruhig mit' (an deren Redaktion, 14. Juli 1887).<sup>12</sup>

Viewpoints around 1890 about both stature and status of this magazine can therefore be taken to have been more complex and heterogeneous than its retrospective reputation, even when based on nineteenth-century observations,<sup>13</sup> suggests.

Fontane's volatile relationship with the magazine bears out both complexity and conflict:

Die Erfahrungen, die Fontane bei seinem zweiten Roman-Vorabdruck – eben *Quitt* – sammeln mußte, waren wiederum geeignet, mit der *Gartenlaube* zu brechen, denn sein Text wurde derartig beschnitten und verändert, daß Fontane von einer Verunstaltung sprach. Aber am Beispiel dieses redaktionellen Eingriffs und der Reaktion Fontanes wird deutlich, wie illusionslos und vertraut Fontane mit der Zeitschrift war, auf die er sich ohne Eitelkeit und Naivität eingelassen hatte. Von einer auch nur stillen Klage, heißt es in seinem Brief vom 15. November 1889 an die Redaktion der *Gartenlaube*, könne keine Rede sein: 'es muß doch schließlich

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<sup>11</sup> Roland Berbig/Bettina Hartz. *Theodor Fontane Im Literarischen Leben: Zeitungen Und Zeitschriften, Verlage und Vereine*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000, p. 195. – Radeck and Heidemarie Gruppe respectively provide examples of interpretations aiming at a wholesale derogatory interpretation of fiction published in *Die Gartenlaube*. In each case, the one-sided construal is due to a noticable left political bias. (Cf. Heide Radeck. *Zur Geschichte von Roman und Erzählung in der "Gartenlaube" (1853-1914)*. Dissertation: Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, 1967; Heidemarie Gruppe. *"Volk" zwischen Politik und Idylle in der "Gartenlaube" 1853-1914*. Frankfurt/Munich: Peter Lang, 1976.)

<sup>12</sup> Berbig/Hartz, *Theodor Fontane im Literarischen Leben*, p. 102.

<sup>13</sup> As an example of nineteenth-century authorial dismissal, a letter exchange in 1878 between Betty Paoli and Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach about a serialised novel by their acquaintance Emmy von Dincklage may be mentioned, in which Paoli reticently criticises the tone of this among other novels in *Die Gartenlaube*, and Ebner-Eschenbach responds stridently: "Wenn Dincklages Roman in der 'Heimat' nur recht gartenläubelt, dann ist's gut, dann gefällt er gewiß. O tempora, o mores." (Charlotte Woodford. "Introduction", in: Woodford/Schofield, *The German Bestseller in the Late Nineteenth Century*, p. 4.) These references, although noteworthy, do not reflect the entire spectrum of perceptions, and their motivation, which demonstrate the traditional (and here contested) 'Hochliteratur-Trivialliteratur' split, is of course ultimately inaccessible.

immer was heraus kommen, was, so weit der Urstoff es ermöglicht, 300 000 Abonnenten, oder wie viel ihrer sein mögen, ein Genüge thut.“<sup>14</sup>

Similarly, Fontane's vitriolic dismissal of "the works of people like Marlitt" went hand in hand with his "competing for similar ground and carefully analyzing the readership of the various journals."<sup>15</sup> A picture emerges, then, of a publication situation in which the treatment of contentious topics was subject to regulation, but was not prevented outright, a situation in which literary quality survives through the "Urstoff", here taken to mean thematisation and its underlying depth of perception. Peripheral and sub-textual meaning construction comes to be of particular interest in consequence. What social critique "Gretchen's Liebhaber" manages to express, as well as the functions of this narrative in the light of the collective, shifting psychological situation will be guiding threads in the reading that follows.

### "Gretchen's Liebhaber's" Subtle Critique: A Deconstruction of Rationalism Through Psychological Realism

The main protagonists of "Gretchen's Liebhaber" are *Angestellte*, and more specifically, three young employees of a large "Modewarengeschäft" who are described as belonging to the "Kaufmannstand" (GL, No. 43, p. 720).<sup>16</sup> Modernity is emphasised in their apparel: Gretchen and her brother Julius are fashionable, the former wearing a "Wollkleid" of "knappen übermodernen Schnitt und Schick", the latter in turn being

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<sup>14</sup> Berbig/Hartz, *Theodor Fontane im Literarischen Leben*, pp. 197-8.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Kohl, "E. Marlitt's Bestselling Poetics", pp. 197-8. – It is additionally worth noting that "among Marlitt's male colleagues, reception was mixed". Kohl cites Gottfried Keller, who refers to the furor caused by her, while in general terms being positively disposed; in 1885 he thanks the editor and critic Josef Victor Widmann for defending her against a virulent attack by another critic [...]" (Kohl, "Marlitt's Bestselling Poetics", p. 197.)

<sup>16</sup> Werner Deich points out that the self-perception of late nineteenth-century commercial *Angestellte* was typically tied up with their "Zugehörigkeitsgefühl zum Kaufmannstand". (Cf. Werner Deich. *Der Angestellte im Roman*. Berlin/Cologne: Grote, 1974, pp. 184-5, here p. 184.) This sense, expressed by Gustav Falke as a need "mich [zu] fühlen" during his years as "Buchhandlungsgehilfe", is ubiquitous in fiction which deals with this milieu prior to 1914. (Cf. Gustav Falke. *Die Stadt mit den goldenen Türmen. Die Geschichte meines Lebens*. Berlin: Grote, 1912, p. 151. For fictional examples of identification with *Stand*, cf. also Rudolf Herzog. *Zum weißen Schwan*. Berlin: Ullstein, 1897, p. 77; Alfred Bock. "Edi Stevens", in: *Wo die Straßen enger werden*. Großenhain: Baumert, 1898, p. 97; Fritz Anders. *Doktor Duttmüller und sein Freund. Eine Geschichte aus der Gegenwart*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1902, p. 290; Richard Nordhausen. *Die versunkene Stadt*. Hannover: Sponholtz, 1911, p. 33; Heinrich Reth. *Noch ist die blühende, goldene Zeit. Aus den Wanderjahren eines jungen Kaufmanns*. Leipzig: Zenien, 1912, p. 7.)

studiedly *chic* to the point of dandyism, or “Stutzerhaftigkeit”. The atmosphere appears to be festive: “Freude und Frohsinn strahlten aus den Augen der jungen Schönen, klangen im Lachen der Männer wieder”. Simultaneously, however, this urban professional class is associated with overwork – they toil twelve hours a day, six days a week, and, when they have “einen ganzen langen Sommernachmittag frei von jeder Werktagspflicht”, their psychological need is escape: the epitome of their enjoyment is “[den Sommernachmittag] nach eigenstem Ermessen *verträumen* zu dürfen” (GL, *ibid.*), to anticipate a major theme of Weimar *Angestelltenromane* by some thirty years.<sup>17</sup> Further, the entertainment at the “Gartenwirtschaft” of the opening scene is an “unverdrossene[s] Orchester vierten Ranges” and the customers are served “dampfenden bräunlichen Aufguß, der sich für Kaffee ausgiebt” (GL, *ibid.*). The narrator here oscillates between sympathetic and subtly mocking description without elucidating the latter. From the beginning, therefore, a slight sense of alination occurs: the impression of harmony is accompanied by artifice; a sense that appearances cannot quite be trusted is created, stylistically to signal the narrative’s major theme.

The story’s chronological narration introduces a dual plot, during the course of which two criminal investigations intertwine, as well as reverse, the fortunes of two families. The first of two narrative crises occurs when *Angestellter* Anton Röver is accused of embezzlement (GL, No. 45, p. 754). The treatment of honour and dishonour is complex: the actual perpetrator, Gretchen’s brother and Anton’s apparently flawless colleague Julius Meermann, is initially used to focalise this theme and to foreshadow events. In a subtle shift from overt narration to free indirect speech, Julius’s perception of his mother is presented at a moment when her idealising reminiscences about his deceased father coincide with the appearance of one of Julius’s shady acquaintances nearby:

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<sup>17</sup> The need to use marginal spare time for escape is thematised particularly by Irmgard Keun, Rudolf Braune and Karl Aloys Schenzinger. (Cf. Rudolf Braune. *Das Mädchen an der Orga Privat*. Frankfurt: Sozietätsverlag, 1930; Irmgard Keun. *Das kunstseidene Mädchen*. Berlin: Universitas, 1932. Karl Aloys Schenzinger. *Man will uns kündigen. Roman*. Berlin: Dom, 1931.)

Wäre die Frau nicht so vertieft gewesen in die Ausmalung einer Vergangenheit, die sie nicht müde wurde, ihren Kindern immer neu vor Augen zu halten, sie hätte bemerken müssen, daß er unsicher über das Kaffeegeschirr hinweg nach der Straße sah [...] mit scheuem Zögern blickte der junge Mann nun wieder auf seine Mutter. Wie sie schwelgte in der Erinnerung an den siegreich durchgefochtenen Kampf mit der Sünde! Welch strenges Antlitz, jeder Zug wie gemeißelt – das feste breite Kinn, die scharfen grauen Augen, der energische Mund! Sie mochte ihres Weges allzeit sicher gewesen sein, und von all den Furchen in ihrem Gesicht hatte der Zweifel keine gegraben und keine die Reue. Zum ersten Male fiel dem Sohne mit Schrecken auf, wie anders er selbst geartet sei, daß weitgreifende Wünsche, unbezähmbare Leidenschaften in seinem Herzen brannten, in seinem Urtheil Recht und Unrecht durcheinander wirrend, die sie auseinanderhielt, gemächlich und sicher wie die weiße und schwarze Wolle der Strümpfe, an denen sie strickte. (GL, No. 43, p. 722)

Several effects are achieved through the use of internalised perspective: rather than vicious, Meermann is unable fully to adapt to the expectations which the moral code of society places upon him on account of temperamental inclinations and unconscious desires, which this code leaves no room for. The transmission of collective morality is here shown to occur in the familial environment, where values become internalised and championed.<sup>18</sup> Frau Meermann's physiognomy and mental certainty are amalgamated to intimate that this transmission is psychologically compelling. Her eyes are not only grey but "scharf", her mouth is "energisch", her countenance "streng", and even "gemeißelt", connoting the immovability of a stature. The import of emotive vocabulary is significant: affective terms are applied not only to denote the son's passionate leanings, but also to emphasise the emotionality of Frau Meermann's apparently rational, black-and-white morality. Frau Meermann's idolisation of her husband is juxtaposed with a detailed account of his temptation: he had been approached by a colleague for a temporary advance from company funds, in return for a financial reward that would have paid for Herr Meermann's seriously ill daughter's medical care (GL, No. 43, p. 722). Julius's mother dubs this situation a victorious "Kampf mit der Sünde"; she is triumphant about her husband's refusal. In a subtly satirical twist, Frau Meermann's rationality comes to be revealed as *irrational*. She ignores both physical and psychological contingency by vilifying the request for assistance – the "Assessor

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<sup>18</sup> For terminological clarification, 'championing' is here intended to denote the act of verbal advocacy, whereas internalisation refers to psychological processes by which *conviction* occurs because values come to be held unconsciously, that is, come to be felt as natural, self-evident, or morally superior. (Cf. also "Autobiography as *Heimatliteratur*", pp. 105-6, 120-1.)

[...] raunte ihm zu" rather than petitioning or entreating, and his psychological addiction is peremptorily dismissed: "der Spielteufel hatte [den Assessor] erfaßt" (GL, *ibid.*). The phenomenon consequently requires neither understanding nor compassion. But this attitude entails a loss of perspective, in itself a bastion of rationality: in lieu of a tempered and judicious view, the idea of ultimate authority is invoked with blanket applications of religious terms, including "Sünde", "Versuchung" and "Teufel".<sup>19</sup>

Additionally, Frau Meermann's indefatigability is suspect: her need constantly to extol the past for her children does not suggest inner repose, but rather, the necessity to reinforce inherently unstable convictions. This vulnerability is underlined ironically, when Anton Röver, before being himself accused, recognises Julius's inclinations and attempts to dissuade him from leading a double life – "um neun fing sein [Julius] zweites Leben an [...] die eine Hälfte seines Tages brauchte von der anderen nichts zu wissen" (GL, No. 43, p. 723). Anton reminds Julius of his filial duty by highlighting his mother's subjectivity: "Wenn je ein Makel auf [den] Namen [Meermann] fallen sollte – sie ist noch aus einer Zeit, in welcher man an dergleichen starb" (GL, No. 44, p. 737). The fact that to Frau Meermann, "Ehre" was on a par with "religion" (GL, *ibid.*) further emphasises her moral absolutes as the contingencies of a supplanted age.

Philosophical engagement, which comes to be fully expressed in the novel *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, is already discernible here. Societal pretensions that rest in rationality and morality as confident and immovable values are indirectly disputed by being shown to be context-specific, and to function inseparably from emotion.

Considering the publication context, it is notable that prevalent notions of honour and dishonour are relativised, that is, partially rather than implacably deconstructed. The ambivalent portrayal of Frau Meermann achieves a subtle, subtextual questioning of her rigid moral stance in the light of the condemnation it facilitates.

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<sup>19</sup> The narrative here provides an intuitive portrayal of a conundrum observed by Max Weber about the rationalism of Protestantism in 1904: "A simple sentence should stand at the center of every study that delves into 'rationalism'. It must not be forgotten that one can in fact 'rationalize' life from a vast variety of ultimate vantage points. Moreover, one can do so in very different directions. 'Rationalism' is a historical concept that contains within itself a world of contradictions." (Cf. Max Weber. (Stephen Kalberg transl.). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Los Angeles: Roxbury, 2002, p. 37.)

Having to some extent explored the scope of “Gretchens Liebhaber” in terms of its socially critical approach, it is also worth focusing on where and how constraints become apparent. A stylistic feature that can be construed as a limitation, for instance, is that narration largely relies on omniscient commentary, and hence on an externalised, rather than internalised perspectives.<sup>20</sup> After Julius has induced mother and sister to return home early from a celebratory occasion so that he can go out gambling, he keeps the light burning in his room to feign nocturnal industry:

Frau Meermann [...] deutete hinüber nach dem hell erleuchteten Fenster des Sohnes. “Siehst du, Grete, er arbeitet wieder, der brave Junge! Sein Pflichtgefühl hat ihn heimgetrieben. Wie selbstüchtig würde es von uns gewesen sein, hätten wir noch mehr von seiner kostbaren Zeit für unser Vegnügen beanspruchen wollen.” Und Grete schämte sich ehrlich. Julius Meermann aber arbeitete wirklich während dieser Nacht, allerdings nicht in seiner Kammer, sondern auf dem Festplatz der Schützengilde; auch nicht an einer kaufmännischen Unternehmung, sondern an seinem Unglück und an der Schande der Seinigen. Es ward eine verhängnisvolle Nacht für ihn, er verlor im Spiele eine bedeutende Summe, die innerhalb einiger Tage beglichen werden mußte. (GL, No. 47, p. 782)

The poignancy which the sole use of irony would here have achieved is counteracted by subsequent explanation; the curtailment of internalised perspectives can also mean curtailment of marginal viewpoints in favour of omniscient judgement. Julius Meermann’s viewpoint becomes entirely marginalised as the panoramic perspective foregrounds looming consequences. The notion of “Schande” is introduced without any hint of its relativity, specifically, that “Schande” authorises ostracising behaviours, and as such is a form of control exerted by the very morality critiqued in “Gretchens Liebhaber”, is not taken up at this point. Thus the explanatory mode of narration here resonates with common consensus in the thematisation of honour and dishonour.

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<sup>20</sup> This aspect may be what the critic Heinrich Spiers had in mind when he deemed Luise Westkirch “schlicht und noch mehr mit dem alten Erzählerton etwa Claires von Glümer [verwandt]”. (Heinrich Spiero. *Geschichte der deutschen Frauendichtung seit 1800*. Berlin: B.G. Teubner, 1913, p. 85.) – The observation that Westkirch’s narratives generally rely on omniscient narration is a valid one. That a traditional narrative style should be deemed sufficient reason for dismissal is of course contested in this study.

Arguably, a more directly formulated direct relativisation of the notion honour is likely to have been a step too far. The mass demographic of *Die Gartenlaube*, as well as the tenacious hold of its original liberal nationalist remit are of interest in this context: not in the sense that accessibility is to be understood in terms of deliberate avoidance of psychological challenge, but rather in the sense that “love of the German fatherland” was not to be outshone “even in instances when one cannot speak highly of it.”<sup>21</sup> More radical modes of socially critical prose, such as satire or undiluted naturalist narratives, permit of a more purely negative, malevolent or implacably confrontational approach, which potentially also renders any underlying preservative message tenuous or moot. Social observations included in “Gretchens Liebhaber” and texts of a similar stature, by contrast, were required to foreground their preservative motivation while levelling criticism. This requirement can be taken to make possible a kind of subtle critique that contributes to the slow erosion of traits constellated as harmful, which does not construct implacable challenge yet does pose serious questions. That each approach has merit is perhaps beyond doubt – that they are complementary may be asserted on the grounds that texts evidencing these respective approaches are unlikely to reach the same audience.

### *The Dynamics of Shame and the Critical Potential of Unterhaltungsliteratur*

As the defining emotion of the honour-dishonour axis, the notion of shame is, unsurprisingly, a prominent aspect of “Gretchens Liebhaber” and it functions both as independent theme and as gateway to other thematic material. As discrete theme, it is a complex psychological phenomenon. “Schande” on the one hand highlights particular societal behaviours, as will be shown. But it also specifies *taboo* and thus reveals those assumptions, moral preoccupations and ideals of which “Schande” is the ‘underbelly’. The way in which it is handled as theme can therefore serve as a gauge to the extent

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation*, p. 21.

that this narrative espouses the individuality and compassion it envisages. In other words, the degree to which shame is itself deconstructed provides an indication of the degree to which society is critiqued. Conversely, limitation in this respect can also provide undiluted socio-historical insights into traditional, sacrosanct values, which the narrative either reflects or espouses in order to reinforce them.

Frau Meermann's pseudo-rational morality presents a noteworthy contradiction while she attempts to instruct Julius and Gretchen. A portrayal of contemporaneous perceptions of social mobility between *Beamten* and *Angestellten* implicitly accompanies her effort:

Niemals soll man sein Leben abhängig machen von dem guten Willen eines Fremden, und wär' dieser der Bravste und Beste. Darum hab' ich es auch nach Eures Vaters frühem Tode meine eifrigste Sorge sein lassen, daß ihr beizeiten selbständig würdet und selbsterworbenes Brot essen könntet; einzig darum bin ich deinem Eintritt in den Kaufmannsstand nicht entgegen gewesen, Julius, weil jenes Ziel im Kaufmannsstand früher und vollständiger von dir erreicht werden konnte, als wenn du gleich deinem seligen Vater ein Beamter geworden wärest."  
(GL, No. 43, pp. 720-2)

In Frau Meermann's exhortations, the well-documented Protestant ideals of self-reliance and resourcefulness<sup>22</sup> incorporate expectations of self-negating duty. It will be remembered that inviolable honour and loyalty, as attributes of a public official, were previously seamlessly transferred to the *Angestellten*-milieu. Such a devotional stance is of course qualitatively antithetical to notions of independence and resourcefulness, which Frau Meermann also extols. Self-denying dedication, as vocational obligation and ideal, has been interpreted as a psychological relic of a patriarchal, feudal status quo. Jürgen Kocka, for instance, discusses the "Feudalisierungstendenzen vieler deutscher Unternehmer" in the late nineteenth century, which "entsprachen [den] Verbeamtungstendenzen ihrer Angestellten" and which produced, at the centre of the economy, "einen in seinem Denken und Wünschen antikapitalistischen 'Mittelstand'"

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<sup>22</sup> William H. Young articulates this ideal succinctly in his analysis of American value systems: "The Protestant [...] ethic of Western civilization, esteeming literacy, thrift, *self-reliance*, and diligent personal effort, became a key element of the individual's path to economic mobility and independence [...]." (Cf. William H. Young. "The Protestant Ethic and Western Civilization", in: *National Association of Scholars*. <[http://www.nas.org/articles/The\\_Protestant\\_Ethic\\_and\\_Western\\_Civilization](http://www.nas.org/articles/The_Protestant_Ethic_and_Western_Civilization)>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.



[...].”<sup>23</sup> Alongside thus attributing conformity and lack of independence to the new middle class, he further notes the “Verbeamtungstendenzen” to operate as entrepreneurial utility:

Solange die Kontrolltechniken, die den Unternehmern zur Verfügung standen, wenig leistungsfähig waren, mußte das Beamtenelbstverständnis und -ethos ihrer Angestellten in ihrem Interesse liegen, wenn dieses Ethos wenigstens seinem Anspruch nach ‘Rechtschaffenheit, Pflichtgefühl, uneigennütigen Fleiß, Gemeinsinn, unbeugsames Rechtsgefühl und schlichte Treue’ enthielt. [...] Das Beamtenelbstverständnis wirkte als Kontrolle gegen die gefürchtete Unzuverlässigkeit und den sich bis zum Betrug steigenden Eigennutz einer Gruppe von Beschäftigten, von deren Loyalität die Firmen ganz besonders abhingen.<sup>24</sup>

While these observations are undoubtedly pertinent both in terms of practical expedience and emotional inclination – Georg Hiller, for instance, highlights the regret in 1890 of a “Harmonieverband [...] daß Gehülfe nicht mehr vom Prinzipal als Fleisch von seinem Fleisch...angesehen werde”<sup>25</sup> – the attribution of causality, which Kocka appears to seek solely in the socio-economic sphere, is more problematic. Max Weber elucidates the contradictory legacy of the Protestant work ethic:

The idea of a ‘calling’, and of the giving over of one’s self to work in a calling [...] must appear fully irrational from the vantage point of the person’s pure self-interest in happiness. Yet the dedication to work in the manner of a ‘calling’ has in the past constituted one of the characteristic components of our capitalist economic culture. It remains so even today.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Jürgen Kocka. *Die Angestellten in der deutschen Geschichte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981, pp. 85-6.

<sup>24</sup> Jürgen Kocka. *Arbeiten an der Geschichte: Gesellschaftlicher Wandel Im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011, p. 118. – The here referred to “gefürchtete Unzuverlässigkeit” appears to have been an enduring problem from the entrepreneur’s point of view. Reference to it can be found, for instance, in the letter correspondence between Werner and Carl Siemens between 1857 and 1880. A letter dated 1857 from Werner Siemens to his brother Carl bemoans that “im Beamtenpersonal liegt unsere Achillesferse” (Werner Siemens, quoted in: Jürgen Kocka. *Die Angestellten in der deutschen Geschichte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981, p. 55). In 1863, he writes that “diese ewigen Betrügereien sind doch gräulich und müssen uns sehr vorsichtig machen.” (Werner Siemens, quoted in: Richard Ehrenberg. *Die Unternehmungen der Brüder Siemens*. Vol 1. Jena: Fischer, 1906, p. 465.) In a letter of 1880, the same writer notes: “Mein Maßstab für Geschäftsbeamte ist der, ob sie niemals ihre eigenen Interessen über das Geschäftsinteresse stellen oder ob man sich darauf nicht verlassen kann.” (Cf. Werner Siemens. *Siemens-Archiv-Akte, Briefsammlung*. 7 Apr 1880.) Literary thematisation of *Angestellte* whose dishonest actions or ambitious attitudes become dangerous to the success of the business or to the employer personally similarly occurs across a wide time-span. (Cf. for instance, Ewald August König. “Conservativ und Liberal”, in: *Humoristische Bilder aus dem Kaufmannsleben*. Mülheim a.d. Ruhr: Verlag Jul. Bagel, 1864, pp. 74-103. Cf. also Theodor Duimchen. *Bruch*. Berlin: Hupenden & Merzyn, 1904. Treatment of this theme in “Gretchen’s Liebhaber”, of course, appeared in 1892.)

<sup>25</sup> Georg Hiller, quoted in: Kocka, *Die Angestellten*, p. 132.

<sup>26</sup> Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, p. 37. – The idea and origin of “Beruf” or “calling” as source of dedication is exhaustively treated in Weber’s study, including from a conceptual-genealogical viewpoint incorporating an examination of ancient languages. Weber makes the point convincingly that the concept of a vocational calling is Protestant in origin. (Cf. for instance, Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, pp. 39-40, 63, 179-83.)

The peculiarly German socio-economic manipulations referred to by Kocka can therefore be seen as expedient appropriations of concurrent spiritual motivations that were implicitly in conflict with capitalistically-connoted individualism.

Frau Meermann's incorporation of what was distinctly also a socio-economically opportune virtue, which leads her to interpret the appropriation of funds by an *Angestellten* as a violation of *sacrosanct* duty, is subsequently subject to equivocation. As has already been highlighted, her perception is far more emotionally charged than would be appropriate to a rational, functional interpretation of a professional misdemeanour. The semantic import of the term "Schande" is revealed in the culprit's subsequent fate:

Der junge Mensch aber, der euren Vater in Versuchung führte, hat ein trauriges vorzeitiges Ende genommen durch eigene Hand, nachdem er einen Freund, der sich ihm willfähriger erwies als euer Vater, mit sich ins *Verderben* gestürzt hatte. (GL, No. 43, p. 722)

Notably, shame becomes synonymous with "Verderben": it effectively means social ostracism so complete that vocational and social prospects are nullified. This entails not only actual poverty but also to be the target of censure at once insidious and extreme, to lead to a miserable existence in psychological terms, not only for the indicted individual but also for their family. Such becomes Anton Röver's and his mother's fate when he is falsely accused. An inconclusive court judgement fails to lift the aspersions that have been cast on him:

Von allen Seiten, aus den Fenstern und hinter den ärmlichen Gardinen hervor lugten die Köpfe neugieriger Nachbarn. "Heute kommt der alten Rövern ihr Anton zurück. Ist seines Vaters echter Sohn, nur schlauer! Haben ihm nichts anhaben können auf dem Gericht" – hieß es da und dort. Die Frau fühlte die bösen mitleidslosen Blicke mehr, als sie sie sah [...]. (GL, No. 45, p. 755)

This portrayal foregrounds not only ubiquitous prejudiced judgement but, notably, reactions akin to glee, or *Schadenfreude*. Neighbours are simultaneously curious, vicious and devoid of empathy.

The psychological dynamic here observed tallies with that presented by Charlotte Niese in *Gottes Wege* and *Das Lagerkind*, where shadow projection contains the psychological convenience of *collective*, as well as personal self-exoneration.<sup>27</sup> Both Westkirch and Niese highlight how, by vesting *blame* in a shamed *other*, the accused becomes a scapegoat who can serve, at least temporarily, as symbol and container for despicable, disowned qualities, the existence of which is denied in relation to the personal psyches of the accusers. “Gretchens Liebhaber” illustrates the consequences of this situation by focalising first Anton’s, then his mother’s viewpoint:

Schande ist immer ein bitterer Trank; ist sie unverdient und kommen Armuth und Mangel als Würze hinzu, so wird sie zum lebenszerstörenden Gift. Die beiden aber mußten dies Gift trinken, Tropfen um Tropfen, es ward ihnen keiner geschenkt. [...] Er [Anton] machte für einen Hungerlohn vom ersten Tagesstrahl bis spät in die Nacht Abschriften und hielt kleinen Krämern, die von seiner Vergangenheit nichts wußten, die Bücher in Ordnung, freilich immer nur so lange, bis gute Freunde die Leute über den auf ihm ruhenden Verdacht aufklärten, worauf die braven Bürger sobald als möglich den gefährlichen Helfer mit mehr oder weniger Höflichkeit an die Luft setzten. Dieser Kreislauf wiederholte sich mit unabänderlicher Gleichmäßigkeit. [...] Mit fest zusammengepreßten Lippen brachte Frau Röver ein Stück ums andere ins Leihhaus, und der Ausdruck ihres kummervollen Gesichts wurde dabei immer trostloser und verbitterter. Sie, die früher nie ein hartes Urtheil gefällt hatte, wurde jetzt fast von Haß erfüllt gegen die mitleidlose Selbstgerechtigkeit der Leute. (GL, No. 46, p. 767)

Here, omniscient narration is used to explicitly ironic effect: *Aufklärung* provided by “gute Freunde” is the act of perpetuating society’s ostracising tendency; “brave Bürger” are those who obey collective directives without questioning appearances. Conversely, in Anton, the narrative presents an extended, introverted form of the Protestant ethos – having previously been honest in his business dealings, he now remains steadfast in adversity. He works for a subsistence wage for small “Krämer” who successively reject him. Further, his honesty is not vested in the vainglorious devotional stance endorsed by Frau Meermann, but in doing what is right for its own sake, regardless of approbation. At the climax of this first narrative crisis, the psychological effects of society’s implacability are convincingly portrayed by allusion, rather than overt

<sup>27</sup> Ostracism, shadow projection and conversely, integration and individuality are of course the main themes of *Gottes Wege*. *Das Lagerkind* illustrates this thematic complex critically when a pending mass execution of pirates becomes a local sensation that entices almost the entire population of Hamburg to contribute to their public humiliation with obvious enjoyment. When the now grown-up “Lagerkind” Burga, who does not join the mass prerogative, hears footsteps in the otherwise deserted streets, “stellte [sie] sich in die Hausthür, um den Menschen zu betrachten, der jetzt nicht vor den Räubern stand und sie verhöhnnte.” (Cf. Charlotte Niese. *Das Lagerkind*. Mainz: Scholz, p. 128.)

description. Anton comes close to indifference when he ultimately replies to his mother's question, "wie soll es enden?" with "zuletzt ganz gewiss fünf Schuh unter der Erde" without looking up from his work. On the other hand, narrative limitation again becomes apparent in the adoption of an explanatory externalised perspective. Shame can *potentially* be deserved: "Schande ist immer ein bitterer Trank; ist sie unverdient und kommen Armuth und Mangel als Würze hinzu, so wird sie zum lebenszerstörenden Gift" (GL, No. 46, p. 767). "Gretchens Liebhaber" therefore overtly criticises the severity and rigidity with which ostracism occurs, and implicitly questions the motives behind such attitudes – yet it shies away from deconstructing this control mechanism completely.

The narrative's overall import can be considered in the light of the continuation of the passage discussed earlier, in which Frau Meermann mistakenly interprets Julius's nocturnal lighting of his room as vocational zeal, as intended by him. As already noted, the ironic effect of her adulation is here diminished by a moralistic explanation of his actual doings – an additional structural purpose, however, is to move the plot forward. In the process, the narrative's inward focus is regained:

Julius Meermann sagte sich, um sich dauernd zu sichern, müsse er vor den Augen der Menschen dastehen als einer, dem man "das" auch nicht im entferntesten zutraute. "Das"! Es war ihm nichts bewiesen, er hatte nicht einmal in Verdacht gestanden [...]. Dennoch war "das" nicht gestorben, nicht einmal eingeschlummert, vielmehr unheimlich lebendig. Es saß ihm im Herzen und grub und bohrte, es schaute ihm über die Schulter höhnisch auf seine Bücher, es war sein unzertrennlicher Gefährte bei Tag und Nacht. Langsam wühlend, hatte es ihn von Innen heraus umgemodelt, einen völlig anderen Menschen aus ihm gemacht. Und nun kam er sich vor wie eine Doppelexistenz, ihm war, als stecke sein eigentliches Ich mit dem angstvollen schuldbewußten, aber heiß und ehrlich schlagenden Herzen in dem fremden gemessenen Menschen, den er vor der Welt spielte, wie in einer steinernen Hülle, welche enger und enger wurde von Tag zu Tag und ihm Athem und Leben zu nehmen drohte. Und eine furchtbare Bangigkeit packte sein bedrängtes Selbst, es mußte sich Luft schaffen, sich den Beweis liefern, daß es noch lebe, und weil ihm dafür neben dem neuerstandenen Julius Meermann am Tage kein Raum blieb, so wählte es die Nacht, sich auszurasen. (GL, No. 47, p. 782)

Julius's perspective here can be termed a Poe-esque turn.<sup>28</sup> His crime, personified as the anonymous entity "das", must be kept hidden at all costs. In consequence of the implacable need to maintain appearances and to repress his shadow, a schizoid psychological state and lifestyle develops. Clues are added elsewhere that add contingency to the self-destructive actions of reckless characters. Young men who fall by the wayside, for instance, such as the young extortionist Habermann who precipitates Julius's thieving, find the company of "ehrbare Bürger", whom Habermann dubs "Kaffern", "öde" (GL, No. 44, p. 738). These young men experience a need to escape a sense of dreariness, implicitly engendered by the excessively restrictive expectations of these *Bürger*, by undertaking "Putzlustiges" (GL, *ibid.*) nocturnally – in other words, to engage in behaviours that are suppressed both in literal and metaphorical daylight. The theme that psychological repression leads to a schizoid situation finds treatment both in European and American literature from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.<sup>29</sup> Its presentation in a *Sozialroman* means the absence of an embellished or surreal focus, which both Zola's unalloyed naturalism and the gothic and fantasy genres are able to provide. Instead, "Gretchens Liebhaber" foregrounds the idea of morality to generate impact appropriate to *Sozialroman* conventions. The portrayal of inconsistency, prejudice and double standards means that an impression of ambivalent and uncertain morality remains. At the same time, the counter-emphasis on

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<sup>28</sup> The theme of psychological schism and autonomous, unconscious motivations that become compulsive occupied literary minds internationally from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Edgar Allan Poe's gothic short story *The Tell Tale Heart*, incorporates the striking thematic similarity in terms of the psychological pressure from the Unconscious, operating as conscience, which becomes irresistible and eventually undermines the conscious will and the ego's power to suppress it. This narrative appeared in German translation in 1883. (Cf. Edgar Allan Poe/Johanna Moellenhoff. *Das verräterische Herz ; Die Maske des roten Todes ; Der Untergang des Hauses Usher ; Der Maelstrom ; Die Mordtaten in der Rue Morgue*. Leipzig: Reclam, 1883.)

<sup>29</sup> Late nineteenth-century postulates in respect of the unconscious mind such as forwarded by Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler coincided with literary treatments of split or unwhole personalities across Europe and America. Such treatments can be seen to be neither geographically, nor generically specific: a high-profile narrative, which resonates with "Gretchens Liebhaber" is Robert Louis Stevenson's novella *Strange Case of Jekyll and Hyde*. This narrative, which combines realist tenets with the horror genre, thematises the autonomous existence of personality traits against which the conscious persona is ultimately helpless. (Cf. Robert Louis Stevenson. *Strange Case of Jekyll and Hyde*. New York: Putnam, [1886]. A prominent French exponent of the same theme is Emile Zola, whose first major Naturalist novel deals with the morbid consequences of psychological repression. (Cf. Emile Zola. *Therese Raquin*. France: Lacroix, 1867.) – This narrative, like Stevenson's, was dramatised in Germany from the 1870s, and published there in its original format by 1882. (Cf. *Therese Raquin: Drama in vier Aufzügen*. Leipzig: P. Reclam jun. [1870s] and *Therese Raquin. Roman*. Grossenhain: Baumert&Ronge, 1882.)

positive values interacts with the deconstructive elements, implicitly and unavoidably to pose a sense of dilemma, and the question ‘what needs to be changed?’

*The Official who Does Not Forget his Humanity*

Grete’s summary judgement and rejection of Anton when he is arrested add an intimate aspect to the adversity he faces. Thus while he remains unchanged, the relentlessness of his circumstances does threaten to exhaust his strength. His steadfastness is narratorially rewarded when the originally prosecuting police inspector, whose habit it is to continue monitoring suspects, becomes sufficiently impressed by Anton’s perseverance to consider him exonerated. He therefore approaches him with an offer:

Ich biete Ihnen eine Stellung bei der Polizei unter meiner besonderen Leitung. Wollen Sie annehmen?“ Röver öffnete die Augen weit, und ein leises Rhot stieg in seine Wangen. Er teilte vollauf die verbreitete Meinung über einen derartigen Beruf. “Nein!” sagte er mit Überzeugung. [...] “Warum wollen Sie eigentlich nicht? Aus Stolz? Ist es eine Schande, die menschliche Gesellschaft von Spitzbuben und Halunken zu befreien? Oder meinen Sie, daß es entehrender sei, Übelthäter ausfindig zu machen als sie abzuurtheilen, wie es die Richter, zu bewachen, wie es die Gefängnisbeamten thun, und das sind doch alles höchstehrenwerthe und angesehene Leute?“ “Ich bin nicht stolz,” sagte Röver leise, “ich würde jede Stellung annehmen – nur ... ich mag keinen so unglücklich machen wie ich’s geworden bin.” (GL, No. 46, p. 771)

This situation begins the reversal of the plotline hitherto pursued. Arguably, the editorial remit, which requires *Unterhaltung* as well as *Lektüre*, here again plays a role – *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, for instance, demonstrates no comparable redemptive turn. But regardless of possible critical views in respect of compromised realist parameters through the introduction of an improbable event, an inadvertent portrayal of values is here afforded which is of particular interest. Even in his destitution, Röver hesitates to take up an offer that would reinstate him in society, because it involves working for the secret police. His resistance is based in a recognition of the psychological impact of prosecution. In this illustration of societal ambivalence regarding law enforcement

processes, there is no sign of a “Machtanbetung” that furtively admires, as well as fears, the activities of the secret police. By contrast, it is just such admiration or “Anbetung” which predisposes the protagonist of *Der Untertan*<sup>30</sup> to collude with suppressive and repressive processes, and which effects his inner corruption. Moreover, these processes are in Heinrich Mann’s text portrayed as sufficiently omnipresent in the collective psyche to be Diederich Heßling’s formative experience – they undermine the development of his personality:

Bereits in den frühen Kinderjahren wird beim jungen Heßling [...] die Tendenz erkennbar, sich mit der jeweiligen Unterdrückungsmacht zu identifizieren und erlittene Strafen selbstbewußt zu Zeichen der Teilhabe an der Macht umzudeuten.<sup>31</sup>

In “Gretchens Liebhaber”, conversely, the activity of the police – the ultimate representation of authority in society – is acknowledged as being commonly viewed with disdain. This narrative, as has been seen, provides a sophisticated exposition of a split psychological situation caused by too rigid a code in respect of moral values, which are fixated on appearances. Moreover, its narrative situation does not present dichotomy between *Bildungsbürgertum* and *Wirtschaftsbürgertum*; rather, the whole middle-class spectrum, encompassing also the new stratum of *Angestellte*, is implicated in the fault identified. At the wider societal level, prejudice causes real value to be missed, and gullibility to abound. Equally significantly, the already noted ostracism, which is shown to be practised by individual self-righteous *Bürger*, prevents integrative attitudes at a collective level. The personal and collective life are here linked: a psychologically damaging collective status quo is maintained by *individuals* who refuse such personal introspection as would admit fallibility in respect of self. “Gretchens Liebhaber” therefore subtly points its envisaged readership, a heterogeneous amalgamated middle stratum, towards values that are responsive to psychological situations in their actuality, rather than only to an inherited, prescribed

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. Heinrich Mann. *Der Untertan*. Leipzig: K. Wolff, 1918.

<sup>31</sup> “Heinrich Mann, *Der Untertan* (1916)”, unpublished lecture given by Dr Gesa von Essen [Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, 2008, p. 8], transcript kindly provided by Gesa von Essen.

and rigid code of morality, in other words, once again, emphatically toward relativised values.

This consequentiality of this relativisation becomes apparent primarily in Anton's attributes and actions. He not only embodies the previously noted values of steadfastness and integrity: after, inevitably, Julius is indicted due to repeated embezzlement to settle mounting gambling debts, the Meermann family in turn becomes ostracised. Anton's disregard of social norms becomes apparent when, as *Beamter* of the police force, he deliberately allows Julius time to flee by pretending not to know his escape route while searching his room (cf. GL, No. 48, p. 799) because he does not wish to be a "Beamter [der] sich dessen nicht erinnerte, was dem Menschen bekannt war" (GL, *ibid.*). Contingency, or psychological reality, is here not only acknowledged, but asserted as a factor that has priority, both over a rigid authoritarian code and punctilious duty. It is also a factor that implicitly prevents the kind of inner degradation which Diederich Heßling is portrayed as being subject to in Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan*.

#### *The Happy Ending as Incomplete Harmony*

Anton relinquishes his desire for revenge prior to this second narrative climax, a change that occurs in spite of his grudge against Gretchen when he observes her personal integrity. "Gretchens Liebhaber" finally provides a compromise between a romantic happy end and one that reflects its psychological exposition. Gretchen accepts Anton's hand in marriage, and the new family unit moves to a distant harbour town where he returns to work as commercial *Angestellter*. Here, "Gretchen ist eine glückliche Frau, eine glückliche Mutter" (GL, No. 48, p. 802) – female independence is avowed as an inward quality, but not as a societal phenomenon; employment here



serves as an interim situation enroute to marriage.<sup>32</sup> This lasting harmony is accompanied, however, by the continuing acknowledgement of limitation and deviance as context-specific, rather than as absolute. The narrative makes clear that as he defrauds the business and injures his family's social status, he does not do so as an entirely free agent. Thus Julius Meermann is not punished – that is, he avoids a prison sentence as well as ostracism by escaping to America. It is Frau Meermann, who like Frau Röver lives with the couple, does pay a price:

Sie spricht wenig mehr von Rechtschaffenheit und Pflichttreue und niemals nennt sie den Namen ihres Sohnes. So oft jedoch ein Schiff aus entlegenen Welttheilen im Hafen gemeldet wird, wankt sie, auf ihren Stock gestützt, zur Landungsbrücke, um den ankommenden Fahrgästen ins Gesicht zu schauen. (GL, No. 48, p. 802)

Thus the happy ending is accompanied by loss and compromise. Frau Meermann's hope that the son return to her "reuig und gebessert" (GL, *ibid.*) incorporates censure that has lost its implacability – Julius's deeds, finally, *are* forgivable. At the same time, Frau Meermann's rigidity symbolises an unviable social situation – yet she is also the product of a time in which her attitude was more appropriate, as Anton Röver points out (cf. GL, No. 44, p. 737). Thus a psychological situation of continued conceptual negotiation is subtly constellated – or recommended – as a counterpoint to collective morality, which is observed to tend towards dislocation and fragmentation.

#### *Epilogue: The Leitmotif of Seeing and the Disparity Between Appearance and Reality as Narrative Discourse*

At the narrative outset, the love interest is introduced in complex terms. Anton Röver's unreciprocated admiration for Gretchen does not go unnoticed:

"Drüben der Herr Röver glotzt mich mit seinen bösen Augen schon wieder an, als wollt' er mich umbringen." "Und das Schwesterchen will's einmal nicht leiden, daß der arme Bursche sie hübsch findet. Warum eigentlich nicht? Kann er dafür, daß seine Augen schwarz sind und nicht blau? Ist er nicht im übrigen ein netter anständiger Kerl, der sein gutes Auskommen hat? Gar kein übler Freier,

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<sup>32</sup> In this respect, the limitation can again be asserted with some confidence to be of editorial, rather than authorial origin – *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, as will be seen, presents a more complex and multi-faceted picture of femininity, as well as of female independence and social predicament.

Gretchen!" "Sein Vater ist im Zuchthaus gestorben!" "Um so mehr Verdienst, das er selbst sich so tapfer emporgearbeitet hat!" (GL, No. 43, p. 720)

It may seem ironic that it is the morally imperilled Julius who pleads for the avoidance of prejudice. Significantly, however, he argues for a sense of perspective, and for the avoidance of pervasive judgements that implicate relatives, a gesture that, rather than being ironic, underlines the narratorial position in respect of the need of relativised values. The use of "Augen" is here conspicuous. It is an image that is pursued throughout the narrative, to form a leitmotif endowed with two major themes: the gaze signifies both the capacity for, and lack of discrimination on the one hand, and non-verbal forms of communication on the other. Frau Meermann, as previously noted, has a "strenges Antlitz, jeder Zug wie gemeißelt – das breite Kinn, die scharfen grauen Augen, der energische Mund [...]" (GL, No. 43, p. 722). That her sharp eyes, while suggestive of strict principles, betray a lack of discrimination is poignantly revealed in her simultaneous disdain of Anton and admiration of her son, whose gambling addiction she entirely fails to perceive:

Wenn Julius jetzt in seiner glatten schmeichlerischen Weise der Mutter nach dem Mund redete, und diese, stolz wie eine Herrscherin in ihrem Sessel thronend, bewundernd zu dem vergötterten Sohne hinüberschaute und von der Ehrbarkeit und Tüchtigkeit sprach, die sich von den Eltern auf die Kinder vererbe, von den Vergehen der Söhne, in denen sich die Schuld der Väter räche – dann wurde Grete von einer erstickenden Angst gepackt vor der ungeheueren Lüge, zu der ihr und der Ihrigen Leben geworden war. (GL No. 47, p. 786)

Grete, who by contrast has detected her brother's guilt is plagued by a conflicted conscience:

Grete aber hatte den gesunden Schlaf der Jugend verloren. So oft sie nachts müde auf ihr Lager sank, schauten durch die Dunkelheit Anton Rövers Augen sie an, wie sie sie angeschaut hatten an jenem Tag, als man ihn verhaftete. (GL No. 47, p. 784)

Her ability to recognise both the situation as it is and her own culpability leads to a further Poe-esque turn, this time in the form of a kind of haunting: "immer von vorne fing die Stimme an, in entsetzlicher Einförmigkeit" (GL, No. 47, p. 784). While her brother is subject to an internal split – the metaphorical counterpart of his diurnal-

nocturnal double life – Grete endures torment consciously. When she first confronts Julius with her discovery of his guilt she is implacable:

“Du denkst doch nicht – Grete, willst du deinen Bruder verrathen?” “Hast du geglaubt, daß ich mich zu deiner Mitschuldigen machen werde?” Er wagte, ihr in die funkelnden Augen zu sehen. “Um unserer Mutter willen – ” stammelte er. Da rief sie außer sich: “Elender, und er – hat er nicht eine Mutter so gut wie wir?” (GL No. 47, p. 784)

Her eyes, which glow, here encapsulate recognition, shock and disillusionment. In this narrative moment, this character undergoes a major transformation from a foolish, vain young girl influenced by the vagaries of consensus, who complains of Anton’s attentions because her colleagues mockingly nickname him “Augen-Anton” (GL, No. 43, p. 722) and because of their “spöttische Blicke” (GL No. 44, p. 738), to one who begins to be cognisant of the disparity between appearances and actuality. She thus avoids becoming merely principled, like her mother.

The same motif is used to develop the theme of discrimination between Julius and Anton. While from the beginning, the latter tends to be misunderstood on account of the intensity of his personality, which gives rise to the impression that his eyes stare “mit einem Ausdruck in die Weite, als wollte er jemand erwürgen” (GL, No. 43, p. 723) even though he is “wehmütig”, rather than angry. That he is also the most clear-sighted character becomes apparent when Julius rejects his counsel to stay away from the extortionist Habermann. As Anton takes his leave, he “heftete seine schwarzen Augen durchbohrend auf seinen Wirth, dann entfernte er sich mit einer stummen Verbeugung.” (GL No. 44, p. 738) While seeing in this instance means the unspoken exposure of self-deception, Julius’s gaze, conversely, means an increasing, hapless desperation as his gambling addiction takes hold of him. The sight of company funds is “wie ein Messerstich”; he has to avert his eye “gewaltsam” (GL No. 45, p. 751) and becomes “sehr blaß, seine Augen brannten wie im Fieber” (GL No. 47, p. 783) at the prospect of discovery (cf. GL No. 45, p. 751; GL No. 47, p. 783).

The second notable use of the leitmotif “Augen” is emphasis on the gaze as communication. It is variously indicated, such as in terms of self-defence when Anton, first accused, stands “wie angewurzelt; in seinem gelbgewordenen Gesicht funkelten die schwarzen Augen jetzt mit wirklich böartigem Ausdruck” (GL No. 45, p. 754), in terms of shocked indignation when in court, Julius tries to incriminate a lowly employee and “der Laufbursche drunten auf der Zeugenbank [...] mit weit geöffneten Augen den jungen Meermann an[schaute] (GL No. 45, p. 755), and in terms of clear-sighted anger when during a chance meeting in the street, Julius tries to assuage his conscience by offering the destitute Anton money:

Röver legte seine Hand schwer wie Eisen auf Meermanns Arm und sah ihm mit flammendem Blick ins Gesicht. [...] “Behalten Sie ihr Geld!” rief er wild. “Ich will Ihr Geld nicht! – Meinen ehrlichen Namen – geben Sie mir meinen ehrlichen Namen wieder!” (GL No. 46, p. 770)

The most significant strands appear at the points of narrative crisis. Frau Röver, subjected to the effects of disgrace, “fühlte die bösen mitleidslosen Blicke mehr, als sie sie sah” when “on allen Seiten, aus den Fenstern und hinter den ärmlichen Gardinen hervor [...] die Köpfe neugieriger Nachbarn [lugten].” Notably, her experience of the “Spott und [...] Verachtung” directed at her and her son is that they “einzudringen schienen” (GL No. 45, p. 755). The “Blick” therefore is not innocuous but allied with states of consciousness. Consciousness, therefore, in turn is an active, rather than passive phenomenon, capable of expressing either truth or deception, and entailing responsibility. As the second crisis is constellated, Grete

wagte [...] nicht mehr, seinen [Antons] Weg zu kreuzen. So oft sie seine Gestalt von weitem sah, durchrieselte sie ein kalter Schauer. Wenn er wüßte! O, der Blick, mit dem er sie anschauen würde, vor dem sie versinken mußte, wenn er erfuhr, daß sie ihn hätte retten können und keine Hand gerührt habe! (GL No. 47, p. 786)

Anton’s potential gaze, which symbolises the truth of the situation in its entirety, is something to be feared. This type of “Blick” is presented as still more devastating than that of social censure, because censure, although a poisonous imposition, is essentially also a type of artifice. Grete, however, refers to a mortification that need have no external witness. “Gretchens Liebhaber”, through its leitmotif, therefore

ultimately takes up the theme of pretence versus actuality, not as a *constituent* of shame, but as a subtext that deconstructs its validity. Shame necessarily is a specifically social observation; pretence versus reality, however, is an archetypal theme relevant to all human interaction. Dignity thus is here constructed as an intrinsic, rather than extrinsically determined attribute.

The presentation of a fallible, subjective reality with limited powers of adaptation to moral codes is an example of the psychological realism characteristic of Westkirch's narratives. Reflecting the theoretical boundaries of literary naturalism, "Gretchens Liebhaber" highlights the discrepancy between environment and temperament, and posits the importance of both. Despite the relatively small scale of "Gretchens Liebhaber", and the absence of a marked cultural pessimism or fin-de siècle mood,<sup>33</sup> this narrative offers social critique that is poignant both to and beyond its immediate publication environment. Its social observations appear to pre-date, rather than to ignore, such widespread moral deterioration as is attributed to this point in time<sup>34</sup> in *Der Untertan*. On the other hand, when it comes to an examination of societal mores in terms of psychological susceptibility, an unquestioned and rigid morality prone to ostracising behaviours, as highlighted in "Gretchens Liebhaber", arguably does produce a collective mentality that is suggestible and more vulnerable to disintegration – and, for that matter, to demagoguery – than one that is alive to psychological reality.

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<sup>33</sup> Volker Ullrich aligns the "vielzitierte Fin-de-siècle-Stimmung" with a "Krisenbewußtsein mit stark kulturpessimistischem Einschlag [...] seit der Jahrhundertwende". He sees both sense of crisis and pessimism in the light of the *Bildungsbürgertum's* "Selbstzweifel und Statusängste" in response to the rise of the *Wirtschaftsbürgertum*. (Volker Ullrich. *Die nervöse Großmacht 1871-1918. Aufstieg und Untergang des deutschen Kaiserreichs*. Frankfurt: Fischer, 2010, p. 288).

<sup>34</sup> "Gretchens Liebhaber" specifies its narrative time implicitly: as already noted, its protagonists are "Verkäufer" who work at a large "Putz- und Modewarengeschäft" (cf. GL, No. 44, p. 739). That this business is modelled on the department store idea, as first championed by Rudolf Karstadt in 1881 and Theodor Althoff in 1885, can be taken from mention of its periodic, hectic sales (ibid.). This business model was thriving by 1890. Additionally, "Konkordia" is referred to as a regional "kaufmännischer Verein" (cf. GL, No. 44, p. 738). Although I have not been able to verify whether this specific organisation existed, the *Zentralverband der Angestellten* (ZdA) lists among its "Vorläuferorganisationen" some free organisations of "Kaufleute" which date back to the mid to late 1880s (cf. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Bibliothek. *Angestellteengewerkschaften in Deutschland vor 1933*. <<http://library.fes.de/angestellte/organisation/0.pdf>>, p. 4.) Similarly, Josef Aman and Paul Lange identify a "Freie Vereinigung der Kaufleute", which was founded in October of 1889. (Cf. Josef Aman & Paul Lange (eds.). *Gewerkschaft und Presse*. Berlin: Zentralverband der Angestellten, 1928, p. 6.) It is therefore reasonable to assume that narrative time of "Gretchens Liebhaber" is concurrent with the time of its publication, 1892, i.e. identical with the narrative time of *Der Untertan*.

## Social Transformation in Luise Westkirch's *Ein moderner Märtyrer*

### *The Old versus the New: An Authoritarian Legacy*

*Ein moderner Märtyrer*,<sup>1</sup> which was first published in 1896, surveys alternative discourses in the search for a viable solution to extremes of social inequality, a ubiquitous reality of industrialised countries at that time. Individuality and gender emerge as ostensibly secondary, yet demonstrably core themes. Due to the novel's complex thematic treatment, the following discussion will focus on its societal agenda and a separate chapter will be devoted to its covert, albeit clearly signalled, meanings. The overt main theme is the contrast between old and new socio-economic regimes, portrayed primarily in the leadership of an ironworks which employs 7,500 labourers at the end of the Bismarck era – narrative time is 1889-1891. The narrative commences with the death of the ironwork's draconian head, Relling senior, whose authoritarian "Herr im Hause-Standpunkt"<sup>2</sup> in business recalls Bismarck's political style. His son Erwin, who inherits the business, visits the grave and surveys the extent of the business in the "nordwestdeutsche Tiefebene" (EMM, p. 2), the setting of the novel:

Wenn er jahrelang all diesem fern in der Verbannung weilte – nicht sein Haß, seine Liebe war's, was ihn hinausgetrieben hatte, seine Liebe zu den Leuten unter den roten Dächern. Die hatte ihn vaterlandlos, heimatlos gemacht, hatte ihn im Herzen und räumlich getrennt von dem Schläfer unter [...] den welkenden Kränzen, seinem Vater. Erst vor drei Tagen, als die Nachricht von dem plötzlichen Tode des Unermüdlichen ihn erreichte, war er heimgekehrt. Er fand sein Erbe in guter Ordnung. Ein eisernes Regiment hat der Alte von seinem Rechenpult aus geführt, und der Erfolg giebt ihm recht. (EMM, pp. 3-4)

The seamless oscillation between objective narration and what amounts to free indirect style<sup>3</sup> is worth noting, since it signals a covert narratorial agenda. The son's

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<sup>1</sup> Luise Westkirch. *Ein moderner Märtyrer*. Breslau: Trewendt, 1896. (Henceforth: EMM.)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. "Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?", in: *Zeit Online. Geschichte*. 23 Nov 2010.

<<http://www.zeit.de/zeit-geschichte/2010/04/Das-Essay/seite-1>>. Accessed 18 June 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Arguably, the vocabulary used is sufficiently specific to Erwin's situation to deserve the attribution free indirect speech, or FIS. Westkirch here uses a shifting focus between external and internal perspectives intuitively, since it had not been critically formulated as a technique by the time *Ein moderner Märtyrer* was published. Although Elis Herdin's dissertation was to demonstrate that such a stylistic device has been

estrangement from his father leads to an apparently purely subjective feeling of being “vaterlandlos, heimatlos”, but this adjective also had political resonance. Volker Ullrich notes that “unter dem Druck der Verfolgung hatte die SPD zentrale Elemente der Marxschen Theorie übernommen, sich also ideologisch radikalisiert”,<sup>4</sup> in consequence of which its members, as internationally-orientated revolutionaries, in turn came to be viewed as dislocated from the state. When “die einigende Klammer der Bismarckschen Repressionspolitik wegfiel” in 1890, this perception did not change, despite “scharf ausgetragenen Richtungskämpfen” between the party’s revolutionary “*Jungen*” and reformists.<sup>5</sup> Volker Ullrich observes:

Sozialdemokraten [blieben], auch nach 1890, als *vaterlandlose Gesellen* diskriminiert und ausgegrenzt. Polizei und Justiz führten vielerorts einen erbarmungslosen Kleinkrieg gegen ihre Presse und Organisationen.<sup>6</sup>

Use of the term “vaterlandlos” to describe the consequences of Erwin’s ethical predicament therefore references this collective ostracising stance. The intuitive use of a still unnamed stylistic device, which has since been identified as “free indirect speech” (or FIS) and observed to be a “peculiar mixture of direct and indirect speech”,<sup>7</sup> is significant:

FIS does not solely facilitate in the reader the direct ‘experience’ [...] of the character’s situation, for it is also a means whereby the author draws the character into the narrator’s focus, sharpens his profile, illuminates an aspect. The fact that pieces of FIS are intertwined with the objective narrative also means that the subjective responses are ordered within the narrator’s overriding perspective.<sup>8</sup>

As the introductory passage of the novel indicates, Erwin is altruistically inclined; he has a sense of solidarity with the people “unter den roten Dächern”. Narratorial purpose

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present in German literature since the eighteenth century (cf. Elis Herdin, *Studien über Bericht und indirekte Rede im modernen deutsch*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wilsells, 1905), Graham Pechley’s findings show that of the “seventeen attributable terms for ‘free indirect discourse’” which he located, the earliest dates 1897. (Cf. Graham Pechley, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Word in the World*. London/New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 208.) The now accepted terms ‘free indirect speech’ and ‘free indirect style’ were coined by the French linguist Charles Bally, who discussed the technique in detail in 1912. (Cf. Roy Pascal, *The Dual Voice. Free Indirect Speech and its Functioning in the Nineteenth-Century European Novel*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977, p. 8, cf. also, p. 9.)

<sup>4</sup> Volker Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht 1871-1914. Aufstieg und Untergang des deutschen Kaiserreichs*. Frankfurt: Fischer, 2010, p. 174. – Ullrich here refers to the succession of *Sozialistengesetze*, which were in force from 1871 to 1890 and which outlawed proletarian organisation.

<sup>5</sup> Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 174.

<sup>6</sup> Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 176

<sup>7</sup> Adolf Tobler, quoted in: Pechley, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, p. 208.

<sup>8</sup> Pascal, *The Dual Voice*, p. 116.

is here therefore presented in veiled form, which, rather than introducing didacticism, allows the question, whether those who envision social justice are likewise to be ostracised, to be asked. Additionally, politically-connoted phrasing appears in the label “der Alte”, which was used to denote Otto von Bismarck alongside the better known designation ‘iron chancellor’. The metaphor “eisern” is, further, encoded in the use of an ironworks as the narrative focus. According to Norbert Elias, “‘eisern’ ist ein [...] Schlüsselwort dieser Periode”, in the sense that a process of “Idealisierung der menschlichen Härte” and a “Kult der menschlichen Unerbittlichkeit”<sup>9</sup> was taking place. The symbolic and ironic use of this keyword in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* therefore indicates a categorical act of resistance to this societal development. Relling senior is aligned not only with a conservative political precedent, but with a conceptually outmoded past, the values of which need to be overturned.

The psychological effects of an authoritarian regime can be termed the narrative condition of this novel. The hallmark of these effects is a mentality – depicted both in labourers and *Bürger* – which can only accept authority as a kind of brutality. Erwin Relling’s slight physical appearance, for instance, causes reservations in two labourers who see him for the first time – they doubt his ability to lead the business. Anticipating an imminent power-struggle, they simultaneously fear punishment for the very act of observation:

“Karl, ich glaube, das war er.” “Der sieht ja ganz paßlich aus.” “Was spirdelich, wie? Ein Milchgesichte! Kein Blut, keine Knochen. Der Alte war Dir ne andre Sorte Kater.” “Na, dann werden ja wohl nächstens bei uns die Mäuse Hopsassah tanzen!” “Ja, gewisse Leute schenieren sich nu wohl gar nich mehr.” “Wenn Du mit das den Fahrke gemeint haben solltest, der hat überhaupt niemals gewußt, was schenieren für’n Ding is.” “Halt’s Maul. Mich is allens Wurscht. Ich thu’ meine Arbeit.” “Na, ich doch auch! Man redet doch bloß ‘nen Ton.” (EMM, pp. 11-12)

Reference to the machinations of ruthless and ambitious *Angestellten* Fahrke is here silenced by their recollection of the danger attendant on expressing opinions, in an implicit reference to the firm’s informer system (cf. EMM, pp. 44-49). The assertion

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<sup>9</sup> Norbert Elias. *Studien über die Deutschen*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1990, pp. 272-3.



“mich is allens Wurscht. Ich thu’ meine Arbeit” indicates their apathy, which is the result of a habitually cowed attitude. One method by which cowing is achieved is the practice of employing informants within the business. It increases the status of authority by endowing it with a panoptic quality; it had allowed Relling senior to be “überall zugleich” (EMM, p. 49). From the workers’ point of view, authority consequentially acquires an abstract, invisible aspect which is inescapable. The only potential for relief from its repressive effects is defiance, in turn dependent on the existence of optimism about viable alternatives. The transferability of skilled workers, for instance, is implicitly asserted in the blacksmith Wehland’s exclamation “Poz Kuckuck! Die Welt ist weit, und arbeiten kann ich!” (EMM, p. 26)<sup>10</sup> when faced with dismissal after twenty-five years of service – the grounds being that he had been found in possession of a socialist publication by an informer. Yet even Wehland, when confronted with Erwin, who revokes his dismissal, is able to equate strength only with violence:

Warum trampelte der Neue ihn denn nicht unter die Füße, wo er’s doch könnte. Aber vielleicht konnte er’s in Wahrheit nicht? Vielleicht war irgend ein Punkt in seiner Stellung schwach, und er mußte schmeicheln und streicheln, wo ein kräftigerer Herr befahl? Vielleicht hing er diese Freundlichkeit gar nur wie eine Art Speck in einer Mausefalle auf? – Etwas war hier gewiß nicht wie es sein sollte! (EMM, p. 28)

The psychological consequence of the workers’ brutalised mentality is presented as a lack of individuality. This is ironically illustrated when Erwin confronts one of the firm’s informers, who appears at his office with information:

“Wer sind Sie?” Nickel malträtierte seinen Hut und schwieg. Das wußte er nicht. Das gehörte auch nicht zur Sache. Erwin verbesserte sich: “Wie heißen Sie?”  
 “Nickel Firmus schreib ich mich.” (EMM, p. 44.)

The consequences of his lack of identity, in turn, is depicted as stark – it causes delegation of “Recht” to those in power and acceptance of their dictates regardless of

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<sup>10</sup> The novel here implicitly mirrors the proletarian “Binnenwanderung” phenomenon, as explicated by Hans-Ullrich Wehler: “Die Wanderungsströme, die sich von Stadt zu Stadt, aber auch von der Stadt wieder zurück aufs Land und erneut in die Stadt bewegten, wurden seit der Mitte der siebziger Jahre in stetig wachsendem Maße zu einer Dauererscheinung. Sie führte für Hunderttausende dazu, daß sich ein Lebensstil ausprägte, der zwischen konjunkturbedingter Mobilität und temporärer Seßhaftigkeit schwankte.” Wehler also indicates the prospect of procuring employment: “von den ortsgebürtigen Männern waren [um 1900] rund fünfzig Prozent erwerbstätig, von den männlichen Nahwanderern aber achtzig, von den Fernwanderern sogar neunzig Prozent.” (Hans-Ullrich Wehler. *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte. Von der “Deutschen Doppelrevolution” bis zum Beginn des Ersten Weltkriegs 1849-1914*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 1995, Vol. 3, pp. 507, 509.)

import. Nickel's "innerstes Rechtsgefühl" is contingent only on his obedience: "er hatte gethan, was ihm Jahr und Tag als Pflicht vorgepredigt worden war, – eine angenehme Pflicht, weil sie etwas einbrachte" (EMM, p. 48). Due to the imposed obviation of moral responsibility, the labourers are manipulable as well as accustomed to a sinister situation, in which fathers "die Rede angstvoll wägen, damit nicht der eigne Sohn ihm zum Verderben sie weitertrage" (EMM, p. 6).

Delegation of moral right to an authority figure and to established societal power relations is not only attributed to the labourers – it appears also in respect of women, *Bildungsbürger* and *Angestellte*. How this scenario is depicted in the relation to women and *Bildungsbürger* will be the subject of a later discussion. To illustrate the insidiousness of the situation in the socio-economic realm, *Angestellte* display the same psychological characteristic as the workers, and thus evidence their powerless position in the hierarchical structure. When the firm's kindly accountant Herr Winter first meets Erwin, "ging [er] sehr leise und vorsichtig und lächelte in einer kindlich verlegenen Art" (EMM, p. 38). His deference and fear are emphasised:

Erwin schob dem Alten einen Stuhl hin, auf dessen äußerste Kante dieser sich halb schwebend kauerte, aus Gehorsam; nicht zur Erhöhung seiner Behaglichkeit. Der Chef sah in sein Buch. "Numero eins" – Du lieber Gott! Was da wohl noch für Nummern kommen würden! (EMM, p. 38)

His cowed attitude, convincingly portrayed through free indirect speech, is grounded in the fact that his position is subject to as little security as that of the labourers. As *Angestellter*, he is provided with a better home, but his tenancy is contingent on employment and he has no pension and few savings (cf. EMM, p. 331).<sup>11</sup> Despite having worked for the firm for thirty-five years, he fears instant dismissal on account of his failing eyesight (cf. EMM, pp. 51-2) and deems it a kindness that his daughter Marie had been permitted to assist him in the office without remuneration: "Ja, ja, Herr Relling. Der selige Herr war so gütig, es zu gestatten – so gütig. Er fuhr sich mit dem

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<sup>11</sup> Günther Schulz mentions that "Rentenversicherung" was so inadequate that "bereits seit den 1890er Jahren [...] *Angestellte* entweder bessere Bedingungen für die Sicherung im Alter [...] oder eine eigene Versicherung [forderten]". (Günther Schulz. *Die Angestellten seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 2000, p. 27.)

Taschentuch über die Stirn" (EMM, p. 52). He further defends Relling senior's feudally-connoted, invasive business practices (cf. EMM, p. 39-40), as also the informer system:

"Hat mein Vater wirklich öffentlich den Preis von einer Mark auf Spitzeldienste gesetzt? Und sind die Leute hier so gemein, für diesen Bettelpfennig ihre Kameraden ans Messer zu liefern?" "Von dieser Seite haben wir die Anordnung des seligen Herrn niemals angesehen," versicherte Winter erschrocken [...]. (EMM, p. 49)

The astute two-fold observation that late nineteenth-century *Angestellte* are on the one hand psychologically aligned with Bourgeoisie, and on the other, economically as hapless as the proletariat again locates blame in a socio-economic system, which individuals do, though need not, maintain.

The psychological consequences of the old system of power-relations have so far been outlined as the emotional equation of authority and brutality, delegation of moral right and hence the manipulability of all employees, and tolerance on the part of the workers of an actually intolerable situation. A further, crucial consequence appears when the labourers show themselves incapable of self-discipline. Having reduced working shifts from twelve to eight hours, Erwin finds that his reforms are not received in the way he had anticipated:

Erwin [...] sah bestürzt die wachsende Verlotterung. Er sah die von ihm sorgfältig nach den Wünschen ihrer Bewohner ausgebauten Häuschen verwahrloster als da er ankam, sah die Menschen, die vier Stunden Zeit gewonnen hatten, zu träge, einen verwitternden Zaun auszubessern oder das Unkraut aus dem Weg zu harken; er sah das Wirtshaus täglich mehr überfüllt, die Bänke seiner mit Kosten und Mühe geschaffenen Gewerbeschule täglich leerer werden. (EMM, pp. 158-9)

Likewise, his revocation of the prerogative to decide who could marry whom and when does not lead to dignity:

Man genierte sich nicht. Ging's ja schief, so kam der Pastor und rückte die Sache ins Gleiche. [...] Die Unsittlichkeit, der er durch die Freigabe der Heiraten zu steuern gehofft hatte, wuchs auf eine beängstigende Weise. Täglich kamen blutjunge Burschen zu ihm in die Sprechstunde, die er eingerichtet hatte, und erklärten, sie [...] wollten heiraten, wären als ehrliche Kerle dazu verpflichtet. Schließlich forderten sie mehr oder minder verblümt vom Herrn die Aussteuer, die beide Elternpaare verweigerten. Er hätte ihnen das Heiraten ja erlaubt; da sei es doch auch seine Schuldigkeit, es ihnen möglich zu machen. (EMM, pp. 158-9)

The narratorial reticence with which reference is made to casual sex can be taken as among the strictures that attended the writing of women – arguably, the use of colloquial vocabulary, such as “ging’s ja schief” achieves an approximation of the impact that a purely internalised perspective<sup>12</sup> would have realised. Inability to take responsibility for themselves here means that the young workers’ loss of fear is commensurate with loss of respect; thus “in den Gesuchen, in der Art sie anzubringen, lag ein leiser Anflug von Mißachtung, gleichsam als habe ihr neuer Herr ihnen Versprochenes nicht gehalten” (EMM, p. 159). The inability on the part of the labourers to adapt is attributed to Relling senior’s authoritarian business regime, rather than to the reforms:

Auf dem lebensgroßen Ölbild über dem Schreibtisch schien der alte Relling mit herabgezogenen Mundwinkeln zu spotten über die Verlegenheiten seines Sohnes. “Sieh, was du angerichtet hast,” sagte sein Lächeln. Aber Erwin trotzte: “Zuletzt hast du’s angerichtet, Vater! Warum hinterließest du mir solche Sklavenherde [...]? Du hast ihre Leiber notdürftig genährt; dafür zwangst du ihre Seelen zu verkümmern. Ich ernte nur deine Saat.” (EMM, p. 162)

Norbert Elias articulates the psychological realism of such a situation, which he sees as a condition of the *Kaiserreich*, as well as of autocratic regimes in general:

Mitglieder einer Staatsgesellschaft, die sehr lange absolutistisch, also von oben regiert worden sind [...], entwickeln ganz analog Persönlichkeitsstrukturen, bei denen ihr Vermögen der Selbstzügelung auf einen Fremdzwang angewiesen bleibt, auf eine starke Gewalt, die sie von außen mit Strafe bedroht.<sup>13</sup>

Thus the “Übergang von einem absolutistischen, diktatorischen” regime to one that is “nicht-absolutistisch” is difficult because the latter requires a “weit stärkere und festere individuelle Selbstzwangsapparatur”.<sup>14</sup> *Ein moderner Märtyrer* develops this scenario of

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<sup>12</sup> While liberal use of free indirect speech is made, for instance, by Emile Zola, who “seems to enjoy taking advantage of it to introduce rather drastic obscenities”, such a technique was not open to a bourgeois woman who did not want to be ostracised both as author and as member of society. It will become clear that *Ein moderner Märtyrer* was in any case close to “the limits of what could be said” at that time. (Cf. David Jackson (ed.). *Taboos in German Literature*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996, p. 81.)

<sup>13</sup> Elias, *Studien über die Deutschen*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>14</sup> Elias here further posits that “Zivilisationsprozesse sind [...] gekennzeichnet durch eine Veränderung im Verhältnis von gesellschaftlichen Fremdzwängen und individuellen Selbstzwängen.” Although he acknowledges this as “nur eines von mehreren Kriterien”, his terminology can be seen broadly to accept the Freudian viewpoint that sees the process of civilisation as characterised by the repression of instinctual inclinations. This endorsement is here not shared: “Selbstzwang”, as psychological phenomenon, is here understood rather as self-discipline without necessarily denoting the need for repression. (Cf. Elias, *Studien über die Deutschen*, p. 49.)

disempowerment by exploring its fateful consequences. The inability of the workers to effect the shift from imposed control to self-control is poetically captured:

Wie der schwere Winternebel aus Feldern und Wiesen, so stieg die  
Unzufriedenheit stetig aus dem Boden der wohlgemeinten Neuerungen,  
verdichtete sich langsam wachsend, bis sie den ganzen blauen Himmel des  
Glücks und alle Horizonte buntfarbiger Hoffnungen mit ihrem undurchdringlichen  
Grau verhüllte. (EMM, p. 156)

Essentially puerile dissatisfaction is the precondition for susceptibility to demagoguery, which begins with the arrival of social democrat “Hetzer” Jakob Schmalz (cf. EMM, pp. 96-7), who devalues the implemented reforms as merely the “Geist [der] Zeit” (EMM, p. 96). He also strengthens the existing lack of self-discipline by insisting that workers should be paid for making the effort to study when the “Fortbildungsstunden” already seem too much effort to them (EMM, p. 157). The narrative crisis ensues when the business is threatened, first by adverse market conditions – “die Zölle, die Frachttarife waren verändert worden. Die Eisenpreise sanken” (EMM, p. 160), and thereafter by a large-scale coal miner’s strike “in den Kohlengruben des Saargebietes – in allen Gruben” (EMM, p. 163),<sup>15</sup> and the workers refuse to accept the necessary strictures to save the ironworks (cf. EMM, pp. 198-200). Their uprising is the result of a glimpse of an alternative, without the maturity to realise it: the accustomed experience of exploitation causes distrust and enraged resistance. Co-operation has not yet entered their realm of psychological possibilities.

Direct speech is used to articulate Erwin Relling’s counterposition: “Sie sind [...] nicht so aus der Hand der Natur hervorgegangen. Sie sind verkrüppelt durch ein langes Kettenhundleben. Ein Mensch hat das aus Menschen gemacht” (EMM, p. 196). This observation encapsulates the narrative interest in the exploration of alternatives and in social transformation. A comparison to the well-known societal portrayal of the same

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<sup>15</sup> Friedrich Engels comments on a large-scale strike by miners in the Ruhrgebiet in 1889: “the German miners’ strike is an immense event for us. Like the miners in England in the Chartist times, the colliers of Germany are the last to join the movement, and this is their first start. The movement began in the Westfalian coalfield in the North [...]. In a week 70,000 men were out [...].” (Friedrich Engels (Tony Brown transl.). “The Ruhr Miners’ Strike of 1889”, in: Marxists Internet Archive. <<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1889/06/01.htm>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.) This event is likely to have served as a reference point for *Ein moderner Märtyrer*.

period by Heinrich Mann is here of interest. The internalisation of the power apparatus is the main theme of *Der Untertan*.<sup>16</sup>

Bereits in den frühen Kinderjahren wird beim jungen Heßling [...] die Tendenz erkennbar, sich mit der jeweiligen Unterdrückungsmacht zu identifizieren und erlittene Strafen selbstbewußt zu Zeichen der Teilhabe an der Macht umzudeuten [...] Diederich war nun einmal, wie der Erzähler berichtet, 'so beschaffen, daß die Zugehörigkeit zu einem unpersönlichen Ganzen, zu diesem unerbittlichen, menschenverachtenden, maschinellen Organismus, der das Gymnasium war, ihn beglückte, daß die Macht, die kalte Macht, an der er selbst, wenn auch nur leidend, teilhatte, sein Stolz war.'<sup>17</sup>

An obvious difference is that of narrative perspective: *Der Untertan* prioritises the upper strata of the *Bürgertum*, which has a stake in power, whereas *Ein moderner Märtyrer* focalises the proletariat, white-collar milieu and *Bürgertum* in turn and therefore provides a more encompassing view of society. *Der Untertan* deals more extensively than *Ein moderner Märtyrer* with a phenomenon which Ullrich elucidates as a political and perceptual weakness of the *Bürgertum*: "Die Schwäche der Zivilgesellschaft – die Sonderstellung der Armee [war] ein dauerhaft belastendes Erbe, das Preußen in das deutsche Kaiserreich gebracht hatte."<sup>18</sup> Militarism, as an internalised value beyond its tangible manifestations, engenders a subconscious scenario in which fear, servility, brutality and aspiration to authority exist side by side as reciprocal traits. In the process of internalising these traits as life-principles, authority comes to be regarded as an end in itself. It becomes difficult to question, since it functions psychologically as an ideal worthy of emulation. This is the process portrayed in *Der Untertan*,<sup>19</sup> which Mann began around 1906<sup>20</sup> and completed in 1913, though it was not published in its final

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. Heinrich Mann. *Der Untertan*. Leipzig: K. Wolff, 1918.

<sup>17</sup> "Heinrich Mann, *Der Untertan* (1916)", unpublished lecture given by Dr Gesa von Essen [Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, 2008, pp. 8-9], transcript kindly provided by Gesa von Essen.

<sup>18</sup> Ullrich, "Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?" Ullrich further elaborates: "Reserveoffiziere [...] wählten sich ständig 'im Dienst', was sich in einem betont schneidigen und forschenden Auftreten bemerkbar machte. Schulinspektoren ließen Lehrer 'strammstehen'; Lehrer traktierten ihrerseits die Schüler in schnarrendem Befehlston. In der Hierarchie der Titel rangierte der Leutnant der Reserve etwas auf Heirats- oder Todesanzeigen an der Spitze, selbst noch vor der Mitgliedschaft in renommierten wissenschaftlichen Akademien." Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 289.

<sup>19</sup> Karin Verena Gunnemann cites the original undertitle as "the story of the public soul under Wilhelm II". She further describes the authorial motivation for writing *Der Untertan* as need for catharsis: "[Mann] had to get the experiences he was having in his daily life in Berlin [...] off his back." Cf. Karin Verena Gunnemann. *Heinrich Mann's Novels and Essays: The Artist as Political Educator*. Rochester/New York: Camden House, 2002, p. 47.

<sup>20</sup> Essen notes that "Korrespondenzen und Notizbücher" show "die intensive Beschäftigung Heinrich Manns mit seinem Sujet [...] er sammelt Material, konzipiert wesentliche Grundzüge der Handlung und publiziert bereits 1911/12 einzelne Teile [...]" (Essen, "Heinrich Mann", pp. 1-2.)

version until 1918.<sup>21</sup> It is worth noting that the distance between authorial present and narrative time is significantly greater in Mann's case than it is in Westkirch's. While preparing for *Der Untertan*, Mann's societal observations were stark:

I live under the pressure of this slavish mass without ideals. The old misanthropic Prussian spirit of the non-commissioned officer is joined here by the machine-like masses of this world city [...] I am making studies of the way in which, at every moment, everyone acts as the superior and enemy of everyone else.<sup>22</sup>

Both major and minor protagonists in *Der Untertan* reflect this observation of Berlin society. *Ein moderner Märtyrer* similarly shows the internalisation of an authoritarian societal code as psychologically degrading. On the other hand, the latter narrative, set outside Berlin, portrays aristocratic mores and attitudes to the military differently. The civilian savagery which Mann refers to, likewise, is taken up but attributed differently in Westkirch's narrative, where it becomes a part of its philosophical engagement. Before exploring these facets, it is necessary to highlight a crucial difference of priority between these two novels, which bears on potential perceptions of their respective literary stature.

*Ein moderner Märtyrer's* narrative scenario of radically opposed styles of leadership finds resonance in Volker Ullrich's characterisation of the *Kaiserreich*:

Überall zeigen sich Paradoxien, wie sie für Gesellschaften im Übergang kennzeichnend sind: Ein innovatives, wagemutiges industrielles Unternehmertum verband sich mit einem autoritären "Herr im Hause"-Standpunkt; ein modernes effizientes Bildungssystem mit der Produktion eines elitären, illiberalen Akademikertypus; ein relativ intaktes rechtsstaatliches System ging einher mit einer rigiden Klassenjustiz gegen sogenannte Reichsfeinde; eine auch im europäischen Vergleich fortschrittliche Sozialpolitik mit einer Ausgrenzung der sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterbewegung.<sup>23</sup>

Reference to a society in transition from one state to another, with the new state as yet open potential, is helpful to an appreciation of the perceptual quality of *Sozialromane*

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<sup>21</sup> Mann's novel, after initial publication in serialised form in 1914, was withdrawn by mutual agreement between author and publisher. Both felt that its satirical import would offend at a time of nationalistic fervour on the eve of WWI: "Im gegenwärtigen Augenblick kann ein großes öffentliches Organ nicht in satirischer Form an deutschen Verhältnissen Kritik üben. Die durch die künstlerische Behandlungsweise des Stoffes geschaffene Distanz vom Leben dürfte in so erregten Zeiten wohl nur von den Allerwenigsten beachtet und anerkannt werden." (Mann's publisher [Emmerich], quoted in: Essen, "Heinrich Mann", p. 2.)

<sup>22</sup> Heinrich Mann, quoted in Gunemann, *Heinrich Mann's Novels and Essays*, p. 32.

<sup>23</sup> Volker Ullrich. "Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?"

published in the late nineteenth-century *Kaiserreich*. Critical awareness of the coexistence of opposite propensities is also encapsulated by the critic Alfred Kerr:

Der Wahnsinn und die Glorie unserer Zeit steigen herauf, beide hart nebeneinander; die Größe und die Bestialität; der Fortschritt und der Servilismus; der machtvolle Gedanke der Freiheit, der Zauber technischen Könnens [...] die Verfeinerung und Erhöhung der Menschlichkeit, die Verbreitung der ethischen Idee – auf der anderen Seite die stärkste Machtanbetung aller Zeiten, die erste Philosophie der Machtanbetung, die Herrschaft des Säbels und noch über dem Säbel die Vergottung des Geldes.<sup>24</sup>

It is striking that this characteristically sharp, satirising commentator notes an intensification of potential for good as well as ill at this historical point of transition, that an “Erhöhung der Menschlichkeit” was occurring and that the “ethische Idee” was taking hold alongside negative trends, such as have been fictionally immortalised in Heinrich Mann’s *Der Untertan*. It is significant that *Ein moderner Märtyrer* dramatically relates the tension between both potentials. The portrayal of two diametrically opposed mentalities is here presented as a close contest; ultimately, however, the narrative favours the “Erhöhung der Menschlichkeit”. It is worth enquiring into the degrees of resilience and resistance that existed in Wilhelmine society notwithstanding its well-documented arch-patriarchalism. Critics like Lagarde, Langbehn, and Moeller, who “affected the sentiments, the *Lebensgefühle*, of respectable Germans for two generations before Hitler”, are better deemed “sick analysts of a *partly* sick society”<sup>25</sup> than its representatives. The narratorial viewpoint of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* echoes that of late nineteenth-century philosopher and psychologist William James, who remarked that “as a rule... it doesn’t profit me to read Jeremiads against evil – the example of a little good has more effect.”<sup>26</sup> The way in which this novel portrays tension – rather than only negative societal tendencies to reflect the historical moment – is of course a significant question: does it simply present an unrealistic social scenario, or a

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<sup>24</sup> Alfred Kerr. *Wo liegt Berlin? Briefe aus der Reichshauptstadt*. Edited by Günther Rühle. Berlin: Siedler, 1999, p. 524. – The letter quoted above is dated 15 Oct 1899. The editor provides a preface which elucidates the origin of the book: “fünf Jahre erscheinen [Kerr’s] Berliner Briefe in der angesehenen *Breslauer Zeitung* und entfalten bis ins neue Jahrhundert hinein ein überwältigendes Panorama an Ereignissen und Charakteren.”

<sup>25</sup> Fritz Stern. *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology*. Berkeley/London: University of California Press, p. 1974, p. xiv.

<sup>26</sup> William James, quoted in: Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair*, p. xi.



voice that was one of the vital, potential alternatives of the epoch? The *stature* of the conceptual resilience of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* will form the next focus of this study.

### A Historical Model for Reform

The vicissitudes which confront Erwin when his reforms meet conscious and unconscious resistance show that the old regime remains familiar and tangible, while the reform initiatives are uncomprehended and distrusted. Rather than being merely a dreamer, Erwin is a “Theoretiker” (EMM, p. 74) who wishes to actualise socio-economic alternatives:

Theoretisch habe ich natürlich Volkswirtschaft studiert, manchen dicken Folianten durchgeackert mit saurem Bemühen. Was sich praktisch von dem Wust verwerten läßt, muß ich jetzt erproben. (EMM, p. 33)

The theory he alludes to can be inferred from the specificity of the reforms he begins to implement. As well as the already highlighted eight-hour working day and “Gewerbeschule”, Erwin intends an internal promotion scheme, so that “Betriebsleiter und Inspektoren [...] aus dem Schoß der Arbeiterschaft zu leitenden Posten hinaufsteigen” (EMM, pp. 88-9). He further adds a profit-sharing scheme to the “Konsumverein” which had been an “ergiebige Einnahmequelle” (EMM, p. 122) for his father. Internal promotion potential and profit-sharing indicates a system the underpinnings of which are both egalitarian and organic. At the time, his reforms “[machen] wirklich, was die Vorgesetzten kaum als fernes Endziel aufzustellen wagten” (EMM, p. 75). He reveals the extent of his vision towards the end of the novel:

Ich [...] möchte die Macht meines Kapitals, jedes Kapitals, brechen [...]. Mein Plan ist, am Ende meiner Tage abtretend, dies Werk einer Genossenschaft der darin Beschäftigten zu übergeben. (EMM, p. 362)

His inspiration here is not the writings of Karl Marx. Accused of being a social democrat by neighbouring industrialist Oswald Hadeln, he replies, “keineswegs. Nicht Revolution, Reformation ist mein Ziel” (EMM, p. 86).

Emphasis on Erwin's studies taking place outside Germany intimates his exposure to international thought and his vision resonates with socio-economic challenges which spread across Europe after the French Revolution (1789-91). A brief sketch of these challenges therefore follows to outline the contexts implicit to this vision. The high-profile collision in England between Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine initially brought politically conservative and reformist positions into sharp polemic focus at the turn of the eighteenth century.<sup>27</sup> Paine's *Rights of Man* makes an impassioned case for equality based on the concept of inalienable human rights, which is echoed throughout *Ein moderner Märtyrer*.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, William Godwin's *Enquiry Concerning Social Justice*<sup>29</sup> was a seminal text from the early to mid nineteenth century, which moreover, Erich Edler deems a direct influence on Robert Owen's *A New View of Society*.<sup>30</sup> Owen's philanthropic activism is strikingly similar to the approach attributed to Erwin. In his seminal work *A New View of Society*, Owen recounts the case history of a cotton mill which contains many of the plot elements that appear in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Burke, a member of the British parliament, published a condemnation of the revolution and its precepts of democracy and individual right. (Cf. Edmund Burke. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. London: J. Dodsley, 1790.) Paine replied with a tract the first part of which is subtitled, "An Answer to Mr Burke's Attack on the French Revolution". (Cf. Thomas Paine. *Rights of Man*. London: J.S. Jordan, 1791.)

<sup>28</sup> Paine's vision of human equality and inalienable human right includes a teleological dimension and a fundamental revision of the purpose of government, from assumptions of privilege and power to duty and service: "Paine insisted on surrounding the individual right with the security of the Declaration of Rights, not to be invaded by any government; and would reduce government to an association limited in its operations to the defence of those rights which the individual is unable, alone, to maintain." (Cf. Moncure Daniel Conway (ed.) "Editor's Introduction", in: *The Writings of Thomas Paine*. Vol. II. Online version: <[http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3742/3742-h/3742-h.htm#link2H\\_4\\_0002](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3742/3742-h/3742-h.htm#link2H_4_0002)>. Accessed 12 Nov 2013.) Erwin Relling's attitude to his inherited position of power is described as "nicht [...] eine Quelle der Lust für sich, vielmehr als eine schwerlastende Pflicht" (EMM, p. 7).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. William Godwin. *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*. London: J. Robinson, 1798.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Erich Edler. *Die Anfänge des sozialen Romans und der sozialen Novelle in Deutschland*. Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977, p. 41. Cf. also, Robert Owen. *A New View of Society*. Vol. 1, 2 and 3. London: Cadell & Davies, 1813-1816. – The German translation was available from 1840. (Cf. Robert Owen. *Buch der neuen moralischen Welt*. Nordhausen: Ernst Friedrich Fürst, 1840.) Robert Owen, who used the cotton mills he ran as test case, strongly advocated the importance of education, environment and co-operation.

<sup>31</sup> The version here consulted is Robert Owen. *A New View of Society*. London/Toronto: Dutton&Co, 1927, pp. 27-34. – The case history is that of a cotton mill in Stryde, Scotland. Its past includes exploitation and the corresponding degradation of the workers and community. Owen refers to himself in the third person: thus when he took on its management, "every means which ingenuity could devise was set to work to counteract the plan which he attempted to introduce; and for two years it was a regular attack and defence of prejudices and malpractices between the manager and the population of the place, without the former being able to make much progress, or to convince the workers of the sincerity of his good intentions for their welfare. He, however, did not lose his patience, his temper of his conviction [...] [his] principles ultimately prevailed." (Owen, *A New View of Society*, pp. 29-30.) The well-known peer of Charles Darwin, Alfred Russell Wallace, read Owen's works and autobiography at the turn of century and devotes a chapter to him in his own memoirs. He finds Owen's vision and experiment entirely viable and attributes a single fault to the social reformer: "the one great error Owen committed was giving up the New Lanark property and management, and spending a large fortune in the endeavour to found communities in various countries of chance assemblages of adults, which his own principles should have shown him were doomed to failure. He always maintained that a true system of education from infancy to manhood was

George Douglas Cole observes of the Welsh philanthropist that “no man was ever at once so practical and so visionary [...] so laughed at and yet so influential”, and that out of the work he produced between 1813 and 1821, “arose in Great Britain the two great movements of Socialism and Co-operation.”<sup>32</sup> Owen, akin to Erwin, suffered financial loss and failure in his ventures, but also experienced sufficient success in the application of his social vision to vindicate his theories.<sup>33</sup> Among the notable aspects of his socio-economic solution are “genossenschaftliche Produktionsformen”<sup>34</sup> and “liberalising education as the basis for rational citizenship”,<sup>35</sup> echoed in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* as the necessity to enable the proletariat not only to attend training courses, but also “[die] Kultur kennen zu lernen” as a prerequisite for their integration (EMM, p. 87). Among the international precedents, the Frenchman Charles Fourier should further be mentioned. He was another international guiding light, for one thing because he is credited with being the formative influence on Louis Blanc,<sup>36</sup> whose reformism is articulated along similar lines to Robert Owen’s. Blanc, additionally, advocated state intervention for purposes of egalitarian reform. Erwin Relling’s view of the purpose of the state likewise holds that “die Menschen, die Bürger, all’ seine Bürger und ihr Wohl, das ist der Zweck des Staates” (EMM, p. 88). Such a view, of course, is diametrically opposed to the idea of an authoritarian state orientated in maintaining the privileges of a minority of its citizens. Additionally, Fourier’s emphasis on the reciprocity of gender equality and social progress resonates strongly with Erwin’s emancipatory attitude to

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essential to the best formation of character. His infant schools had only been about ten years in existence, when, owing to some difficulties with his Quaker partners [...] he gave up the management into their hands.” (Alfred Russell Wallace. *My Life: A Record of Events and Opinions*. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1905, p. 56.) Viability, according to Russell, therefore lies in perseverance, since a psychological transformation is required.

<sup>32</sup> G.D.H. Cole, “Introduction”, in: Owen, *A New View of Society*, p. vii.

<sup>33</sup> Although Owen’s community experiments in America failed, his successes at the cotton mill at New Lanark, which he part-owned, became a “much frequented place of pilgrimage for social reformers, statesmen, and royal personages.” <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/436254/Robert-Owen/5434/Philosophy-of-social-reform>>. Accessed 29 Sept 2012. – Cole observes that Owen “aimed at making New Lanark not merely an efficient factory, but a well-governed human community based on ideals. The manufacturer of those days – especially when his factory stood in an isolated place – had a tremendous hold over his employees. The houses in which they lived, the shops at which they bought their provisions, the entire village as well as the factory belonged to the employer, who gathered together his force of labourers from far and near, and could rule over them as a benevolent or malevolent despot. Owen had a high idea of the duties which this vast power entailed. (Cole, “Introduction”, pp. ix-x.)

<sup>34</sup> Edler, *Die Anfänge des sozialen Romans*, p. 41.

<sup>35</sup> Cole, “Introduction”, p. xviii.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Louis Blanc. *Organisation du travail*. Bruxelles : Société belge de librairie, Hauman et ce., 1845. – The German translation appeared in 1847. (Cf. Edler, *Die Anfänge des sozialen Romans*, p. 42.)

women, which will be discussed in detail later.<sup>37</sup> As sources of Erwin Relling's social vision, these integrative voices overall emerge as prominent and serious thinkers across a broad philosophical spectrum.

Among the German historical precedents, the Catholic theosopher and ecumenist Franz von Baader (1765-1841) is the most noteworthy, not only because his activism again strongly resonates with that of *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, but because his legacy continued into the late nineteenth century in Germany. Edler provides some useful insights into the priorities of this thinker:

Statt der üblichen Festsetzung von Preisminimum und Lohnmaximum erkennt Baader das Recht des Arbeiters auf ausreichenden Lohn an. Neben der seit Pestalozzi und Fichte bis zu Auerbach und Fanny Lewald geforderten Verbesserung der Volksbildung verlangt er eine allgemeine Behebung der materiellen Notlage [...] aus einer von der [...] Staatsregierung überwachten "legalen Assoziation".<sup>38</sup>

Erwin's preoccupation with "ausreichende[m] Lohn" is depicted from Hadeln's perspective, who deems him a "Phantast" but "anständig" because after the uprising "quält [er] sich wieder damit, wie's anzustellen wäre, seinen Leuten zwanzig Pfennig am Lohn zuzulegen" (EMM, p. 353). Akin to the above-mentioned French and English thinkers as well as his compatriots, Baader proposes state intervention and educational provision and, notably, a form of workers' union that is recognised by a state responsible for the well-being of the whole. Ramón Betanzos provides a useful summary of the social engagement of the Munich-based theocentric philosopher whose "prolix rhetoric is difficult to assimilate, [who further] was widely admired by [...] German Romantics and profoundly influenced their thinking".<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> For a discussion of how Fourier's gender discourse resonates with *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, cf. "Conclusion", pp. 367-8.

<sup>38</sup> Edler, *Die Anfänge des sozialen Romans*, p. 43.

<sup>39</sup> Ramón J. Betanzos. *Franz von Baader's Philosophy of Love*. Vienna: Passagen-Verlag, 1998, p. 11f. – Although Baader received accolades by peers including Schelling, Hegel, Novalis, Görres, Arnim and Schlegel, his "fame and influence waned rapidly after his death". Betanzos evaluates: "Fame and influence are largely determined by the surviving (written) record, not by glowing accounts of verbal eloquence offered by contemporary supporters and apologists." While "Baader produced [a] large corpus of written material during more than a half century of diligent labor [...] he was neither intellectually disposed nor psychologically inclined to gather and organise it into a coherent body of thought." Further, "substantial

In 1835, Baader wrote an important essay concerning the social problem and how the exploitation of the proletariat posed a special danger. The full title of the article reads: *Über das dermalige Missverhältniss der Vermögenslosen oder Proletaires zu den Vermögen besitzenden Classen der Societät in Betreff ihres Auskommens sowohl in materieller als intellectueller Hinsicht aus dem Standpuncte des Rechts betrachtet*. It is noteworthy that Baader is the first writer to introduce the word “proletariat”, in the socialist sense, into Germany. It is also noteworthy that Baader favors justice and law as appropriate means for addressing the social problem; he rejects sporadic charitable gestures as totally inadequate. Finally, Baader stresses the spiritual as well as the material aspects of the social problem. He shows clearly in this essay that the real danger threatening Europe was the social problem, not political problems. Indeed, he anticipated in remarkable detail the type of systematic analysis that was to make Karl Marx so renowned just before mid-century. Their suggested solutions to social inequality were, of course, worlds apart.<sup>40</sup>

The above-mentioned essay by Baader is a cautionary narrative which includes analysis of the origins of proletarian misery in England and France, where the industrial revolution had begun significantly earlier than it had in Germany.<sup>41</sup> Baader combines social activism with a spiritual perspective, which also appears in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* – Erwin’s motivation for reform is his dispassionate “Liebe zu den Leuten” (EMM, p. 3), rather than judicious thought processes.<sup>42</sup> The essay proceeds from the point of view that early industrialising nations provide a case study regarding inevitable consequences of social imbalance resulting from unrestrained capitalism.<sup>43</sup> The recommendation that European industrialising states needed to look within rather than without to maintain international equilibrium is a remarkable counterpoint to what was to

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evidence suggests that he thought of himself principally as a sower or purveyor of ideas, not as the architect of a comprehensive philosophical system.” (Betanzos, *Franz von Baader’s Philosophy*, pp. 12-3).

<sup>40</sup> Betanzos, *Franz von Baader’s Philosophy*, p. 76.

<sup>41</sup> First-hand experience from his five-year stay in England and travels in France provides a primary source for his observations, and Baader observes further: according to him, the “Mißverhältnis [der Vermögenslosen [...] hinsichtlich ihres Auskommens zu den Vermögenden] [hängt zusammen] mit jenem zwischen der Geld- und Naturalwirthschaft (in Besitz, in Abgaben und Löhnungen) nach ihrer materiellen Seite [...] was bereits mit der Entdeckung Amerikas in Europa seinen Anfang nahm, sich aber dermalen auf die Spitze getrieben hat.” (Franz von Baader, *Über das dermalige Missverhältniss der Vermögenslosen oder Proletaires zu den Vermögen besitzenden Classen der Societät in Betreff ihres Auskommens sowohl in materieller als intellectueller Hinsicht aus dem Standpuncte des Rechts betrachtet*. Munich: Georg Franz, 1835, p. 5.)

<sup>42</sup> Robert Owen, conversely, emphasises the virtues of rationalism over irrationalism throughout his writing. Altruistic motivation is therefore interpreted as due to a “truly just spirit”, rather than to love (Owen, *A New View of Society*, p. 19). At the same time, he does not disavow spirituality. In the previously mentioned case history of a cotton mill in Scotland, he elucidates that one of the reforms there had been to “inculcate[] that all should attend to the essence of religion, and not act as the world was now taught to act and trained to do; that is, to overlook the substance and essence of religion, and devote their talents, time, and money, to that which is far worse than its shadow, sectarianism; another term for something very injurious to society [...]” (Owen, *A New View of Society*, p. 32). *Ein moderner Märtyrer* echoes such a search for religious essence, but goes a step further in naming compassion and a “just spirit” ‘love’. In this respect, the novel echoes Baader more than Owen.

<sup>43</sup> It should here be mentioned that Owen, perhaps unsurprisingly, likewise decries the social effects of the *laissez-faire* economic system. As Cole points out, “by insisting that the acquisition of wealth on such terms might mean the destruction of men, Owen put forward a different ideal, and became the pioneer of new views both of education and of factory management. (Cole, “Introduction”, p. xi.)

be the late nineteenth-century notion of a balance of power – Baader holds the spiritual consciousness and development of entire states to be arrested while hierarchical social structures brutalise those in the lowest strata. He therefore announces that his purpose is to draw the attention “der Rechtskundigen und Publicisten” in Germany and elsewhere to the pressing necessity of the “*Einbürgerung* der Proletairs”.<sup>44</sup> With the revolutions of 1789 and 1830, as well as the consequent European wars still recent, he witnesses factory conditions during his five-year stay in England and admonishes:

Seyd gerecht gegen sie [...] so werdet ihr eure eigne Ruhe sichern. – Bekannt ist es nämlich, daß der Jakobinismus oder Revolutionismus sich eben nur der vermögenslosen Volksklasse, als gleichsam ihrer stehenden Armee in ihren Angriffen auf die Ruhe und den Bestand der Societät bedienen.<sup>45</sup>

Reflecting late nineteenth-century fears of Marxist-inspired socialism, perception of socio-political schisms in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* echoes Baader’s recommendations. As already alluded to, Erwin’s idea of justice for the workers emphatically includes “Einbürgerung”:

Ich liebe unsere mühsam errungene Kultur [...] Ich [halte] es für notwendig, der Arbeiterklasse die Muße und die Mittel zu gewähren, diese Kultur kennen zu lernen. Sie ist gerettet, wenn ihre Segnungen erst in die Hütten dringen, wenn sie dem Volk so unentbehrlich geworden ist wie uns. (EMM, pp. 86-7)

Baader predicts the spread of “Revolutionismus” across industrialised countries. He anticipates his opponents’ objections to the view that repressive political measures against the proletariat needed to be lifted, and worker associations encouraged:

Der erste Einwurf ist [...] der, daß man der Maxime: *divide et impera*, entgegen durch eine solche Association der Proletairs, und gewissermaßen Assekuranzanstalt für sie (ohne welche doch ihrem Elende keine Abhilfe geschehen kann), die zu vermeidende Gefahr nur selber näher herbeizöge; wogegen aber zu erinnern ist: a) daß derlei von den Proletairs selbstgemachte Associationen wirklich schon bestehen; und b) daß nur diese, nicht aber die von den Regierungen zusammenberufene und unter ihrer Aufsicht und Leitung stehenden Association Gefahr drohen, welche Gefahr im Gegentheil eben nur durch Bildung solcher legalen Associationen und Organe abwendbar ist.<sup>46</sup>

Baader’s recommendation that recognised workers’ associations should proceed under direction of the state proceeds in accordance with a teleological perspective of society

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<sup>44</sup> Baader, *Über das dermalige Missverhältniss der Vermögenslosen*, p. 13. [Italics added].

<sup>45</sup> Baader, *Über das dermalige Missverhältniss der Vermögenslosen*, p. 6.

<sup>46</sup> Baader, *Über das dermalige Missverhältniss der Vermögenslosen*, p. 14.

which, paradoxically, is both reformist and preservative. His arguments overall construe *shared predicament* because his basis for critique is justice, as indicated by the essay's long title. According to him, "der Tyrann, so wie der eigentliche Revolutionär", is unjust, whether he be "Oberer oder Unterer, Regent oder Regierter, Kirchenvorsteher oder Laienbruder, Reicher oder Armer, Serviler oder Liberaler."<sup>47</sup> To apprehend the import of his meaning, it is worth bearing in mind that advocacy in 1835 of an "Assekuranzanstalt", a concept that amounts to national insurance measures, is well ahead of its time. Baader goes on to substantiate his argument by recognising the proletariat as a "puissance" [great societal power], and hence as legitimate. He expresses his call for social integration in allegorical terms:

Jede in der Societät sich aus irgend einem Rechtsgrunde erzeugende Puissance wird der bestehenden Ordnung und ihren Organen nur damit gefährlich, daß man sie von der Einverleibung (Repräsentation) in diesen Gesamt-Organism ausschließt, anstatt sie in diesen mit aufzunehmen, wie denn bekanntlich eine Opposition nur dann gefährlich zu werden beginnt, wenn sie nicht mehr in den Regierungsorganen sich spürbar macht, oder wie der Fechtende des Stoßes gewärtig seyn muß, so wie er die Klinge seines Gegners nicht mehr spürt, und also auch nicht mehr führt [...]<sup>48</sup>

While he defends the established culture from being overturned, he insists on a revision of existing power relations by including the proletariat's political representation. His incidental but lucid psychological analysis of the effects of repression<sup>49</sup> is made possible by his conception of society as an *organism* that evolves. Intervention, accordingly, must assist its development from within established structures. If these structures instead exercise repression, they here not only prevent positive evolution, but actually achieve the autonomous agency, rather than removal, of the object of repression. In consequence, he sees the tendency to negative evolution, as regression,

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<sup>47</sup> Baader, *Über das dermalige Missverhältniss der Vermögenslosen*, p. 23.

<sup>48</sup> Baader, *Über das dermalige Missverhältniss der Vermögenslosen*, p. 15.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. also the discussion of the significance of psychological repression in "Autobiography as *Heimatliteratur*", pp. 88-90; p. 108, footnote 69.

“zum alten Despotismus und Servilismus”<sup>50</sup> as the potential both of reactionary and of revolutionary forces.

*Ein moderner Märtyrer* parallels Baader’s simultaneously preservative and reformist synthesis since it similarly constellates as reality the notion of *shared predicament*, rather than of vying interests, at a societal level. Erwin defends his stance:

Ich liebe unsere mühsam errungene Kultur und ich würde es als einen unersetzlichen Verlust betrachten, wenn der elementare Ausbruch der Massenverzweiflung sie wegschwemmen sollte, wie ein überschäumender Gießbach sorgsam auf den Fels getragene Ackerkrume. (EMM, p. 87)

Use of simile emphasises the organic and fragile status of cultural achievement; the potential of reversion to a base or earlier evolutionary state is here given in the image of a rock swept bare of hummus. Erwin also echoes the theosopher’s direct proposals by recognising the workers’ right to organise (cf. EMM, p. 74-5). In espousing personable relations and workers’ disputations (cf. EMM, p. 166-7), the notion of mutuality and interdependence is established and the schism between ruler and ruled undermined in contravention to the pervasive “etatistische[n] Grundzug”, which, concurrently with the novel’s publication, propagated the already referred-to “Herr im Hause Standpunkt” auf “innerbetrieblicher Ebene”<sup>51</sup> as norm. Recognition of the danger of repression *per se*, similarly, is well encapsulated in the depiction of Relling senior as unseeing:

Die Augen starr auf das in seinen Händen reißend zusammenströmende Gold gerichtet, weiß [Relling senior] [es] nicht, merkt er’s nicht, daß er emsig Zündstoff zusammenträgt und aufschichtet zum drohenden Weltbrand, der, wenn er ausbricht, mit dem Schiefen, Ungerechten, und Überlebten einer vergangenen Weltordnung auch ihre lebensstrotzenden Errungenschaften, die Kulturblüte von Jahrtausenden hinwegraffen wird. (EMM, pp. 5-6)

Significantly, metaphoric content here signals not only gravity, but universality: it is not only Germany, but the world that is subject to socio-political upheaval and cultural

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<sup>50</sup> In Baader’s complex argument structure, this potential is also intrinsically linked to the loss of spirituality in society. (Cf. Baader, *Über das dermalige Missverhältniss der Vermögenslosen*, p. 11.)

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 284.



degradation when an unjust and essentially superseded worldview is insisted upon and maintained.

In Baader's essay the social problem is overtly identified as the danger of spreading revolution. Betanzo's observation that according to the theosopher, "the real danger threatening Europe was the social problem, not political problems" implicitly also refers to the potential for political ramifications. *Ein moderner Märtyrer* portrays the relationship between social imbalance and international instability directly. In a dialogue between Erwin and the aristocratic Florence, the latter raises the spectre of war as solution:

"Glauben Sie, daß es Krieg geben wird?" "Wie kommen Sie darauf?" "Ich wollt's!" "Sie wollten, daß es Krieg gäbe?" "Ja gewiß! Sehen Sie mich nur nicht so strafend an. Der Krieg ist das größte Übel nicht. Und was soll denn auch sonst werden? Unser Volk, das sagen Sie selbst, ist zerrissen in zwei Völker. Oben ein kleiner Teil, der genießt, ideel wie Sie, oder materiell wie mein Bruder, unten das Gros, der Kern der Armee, hungernd, frierend, neidisch hinaufschielend zu den Bevorzugten und bereit sich voll heißer Gier auf sie zu stürzen. Zwischen beiden der Abgrund. Sollen wir uns gegenseitig zerfleischen? Nein, lassen Sie den Krieg kommen, den frischen fröhlichen Krieg! Unter seinem Zauber sind die oben und die unten mit einem Schlage wieder ein Volk, haben eine Hoffnung, ein Ziel, ein Vaterland." (EMM, p. 126)

The novel's depiction of a society the strata of which are in conflict is here problematised by a peripheral, radicalised voice. By having an upper-class protagonist unconsciously assume that the notions of warrior-spirited nationalism and social egalitarianism are complementary, and even symbiotic, the narrative warns of a further danger, supplementary to its main hypothesis. The proletariat, on the one hand, is viewed as the recipient of disadvantage and subjugation, as well as being subject to material poverty – its "heiße Gier" instinctively seeks to appropriate privileges that are both "material" and "ideel". On the other hand, the idea that domestic social pressure may find release in the levelling effects of international warfare<sup>52</sup> is shown potentially to find support from above, as well as below. Significantly, Florence, a protagonist in

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<sup>52</sup> Florence's assertion looks ahead to the potential of a European war, rather than referencing the small-scale colonial conflicts occurring during this period: these would not extend to the effects envisaged in her speech.

whom gender and social critique are combined,<sup>53</sup> anticipates by eighteen years the speech made by William II, in which he recognises no parties, only Germans upon the outbreak of WWI.<sup>54</sup>

Baader's dislike of "sporadic charitable gestures" is echoed in a dialogue between Erwin and Florence:

"Die Geschäftsbücher interessieren mich nicht so wie die Menschen." "Menschen? – Kann man sich für die denn auch interessieren?" "Aber mein Fräulein!" "Ja, ja, ich verstehe schon! Kinderkrippen, Jünglingsverein, Strumpfstricken, Bibelstunden, Suppenanstalten – Brr!" "Mein Ehrgeiz ist noch viel ausschweifender. Ich suche die moderne Quadratur des Zirkels, die Lösung des Problems, meinen Arbeitern ein menschenwürdiges Dasein zu sichern, ohne die Konkurrenzfähigkeit des Betriebes preiszugeben. (EMM, pp. 32-3)

At a time when Germany was still a pre-welfare society, serious reform ambitions in the face of social inequality logically led to recommendations along the lines of a "Rechtsanstalt", rather than "Wohlthätigkeitsanstalt".<sup>55</sup> Yet Germany in the 1890s was still subject to a "Machtstruktur [...] [die] weiterhin von vorindustriellen Herrschaftsschichten, von Bürokratie, Militär und Adel, bestimmt wurde."<sup>56</sup> In an authoritarian political system, the purpose of the state is perceived in terms of power and control, rather than duty and service. State intervention, therefore, does not proceed from a position of responsibility to the welfare of all the 'components of an organic whole', as envisaged by Baader and the other social thinkers previously referred to, and as expressed in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*. It proceeds instead in terms of *concession*, which merits gratitude and obeisance. Since concessions are designed to reiterate, rather than challenge the established order, they tend to be palliative, rather than reformative.<sup>57</sup> This narratorial concern resonates with the concurrent political

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<sup>53</sup> This protagonist is discussed in detail in "Individuality and Gender in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*", pp. 308ff.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. "Stenographische Berichte", in: *Verhandlungen des Reichstags*. Vol. 306, 1914/16, p. 1f.

<sup>55</sup> Baader, *Über das dormalige Missverhältniss der Vermögenslosen*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>56</sup> Jürgen Kocka. *Die Angestellten in der deutschen Geschichte 1850-1980*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981, p. 69.

<sup>57</sup> The 1880s social insurance measures were concessions in the face of the infamous "anti-socialist laws" and aimed to reconcile the proletariat to the authority of the state and existing status quo. Social legislation established by Bismarck included the "Krankenversicherung von 1883" and the "Unfallversicherung von 1884". A "Rentenversicherung" with a remit across the blue- and white-collar work sphere – it "bezog die kaufmännischen und technischen Angestellten mit Jahreseinkommen bis zu 2000 Mark ein" – was also implemented in 1889, of which Schulz notes: "1907 waren 63% der männlichen und 94% der weiblichen

situation. Soon after his succession, William II introduced reform measures which, however, faltered as early as 1893:

Enttäuscht darüber, daß die Arbeiter die kaiserlichen Wohltaten nicht mit politischem Wohlverhalten honorierten, wandten sich Wilhelm II. und seine Ratgeber schon bald von dem Gedanken der Sozialreform ab. Und in demselben Maße wuchs wiederum die Neigung, den anscheinend unaufhaltsamen Aufstieg der Sozialdemokratie mit einer Politik der Repression zu begegnen.<sup>58</sup>

Reform envisioned in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, conversely, does not amount to advocacy of isolated initiatives designed to preserve the established social system – as previously cited, Erwin “möchte die Macht [seines] Kapitals, jedes Kapitals, brechen” (EMM, p. 362) and wants to enlist the state represent. His wish to achieve the “Quadratur des Zirkels” therefore is inseparable from a conceptual revision of the purpose of the state, from power to service, and from privilege to representation.

#### A Socio-Economic Legacy: Organicism Revisited

“Volkswirtschaft” is repeatedly referred to as the study which underpins Erwin’s capacity for effecting change. The term merits some further explication, because a differentiated understanding of its meaning facilitates an insight into a philosophical premise of *Ein moderner Märtyrer*. “Volk” in the context of this novel has no mythological connotations, but it does function to challenge social dividing lines and to underline the narrative’s romantic, organic or holistic conceptualisation. A point of potential confusion is how “Volkswirtschaft” differs from the term “economics”. “Economics” has come to imply at base the concept of an “invisible hand” mechanism, which was central to Adam Smith’s ground-breaking treatise of 1776:<sup>59</sup>

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Angestellten in der Rentenversicherung versichert. Deren Leistungen waren allgemein sehr gering”, and one of the reasons for agitation by *Angestellte*. (Schulz, *Die Angestellten*, p. 27.)

<sup>58</sup> Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 189.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Adam Smith. *An Enquiry into the Cause of the Wealth of Nations*. London: George Routledge, 1776. – Mark Skousen contends that although Adam Smith used the term “invisible hand” only three times in his original thesis and the term was not in common use until the nineteenth century, this does not mean that it

Every individual necessarily labours to render the annual revenue of the society as great as he can. He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it. By preferring the support of domestic to that of foreign industry, he intends only his own security; and by directing that industry in such a manner as its produce may be of the greatest value, he intends only his own gain; and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. [...] By pursuing his own interest, he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.<sup>60</sup>

The Austrian-born economist Friedrich Hayek elaborates on this idea:

The spontaneous interplay of the actions of individuals may produce something which is not the deliberate object of their actions but an organism in which every part performs a necessary function for the continuance of the whole, without any human mind having devised it [...] The recognition of the existence of this organism is the recognition that there is a subject matter for economics.<sup>61</sup>

Use of the term organism is not helpful here, since it potentially impedes an understanding of two fundamentally different approaches to collective economic activity. Israel Kirzner articulates the consequence of this common terminological obfuscation:

The word [Volkswirtschaft] seems almost by philological accident to have given rise to features in German-language definitions that are absent in English-language discussions of the subject. Numerous disquisitions on the *Wesen* of the *Volkswirtschaft* evince conceptions ranging from the more holistic views of

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was not central to his thesis. (Cf. Mark Skousen, *The Big Three in Economics. Adam Smith, Karl Marx and John Maynard-Keynes*. London/New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2007, p. 21-4.)

<sup>60</sup> Adam Smith. *An Enquiry into the Cause of the Wealth of Nations*. London: George Routledge, 1776. Online version: <<http://www2.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/adam-smith/wealth-nations.pdf>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013, pp. 363-4. Accessed 12 Nov 2013. – James Schmidt notes in respect of this text that “Smith and his colleagues [...] were acutely aware that commercial progress was not without its costs” and that Smith himself commented that “it also tended to undermine an individual’s capacity for functioning as an active member of society.” (James Schmidt. “Lecture 11: The Scottish Enlightenment and the Origins of Social Theory”, in: *The Enlightenment. Reason, Tolerance, and Humanity*. Recorded Books, LLC. 2007.) *Wealth of Nations* is of course context-specific; historically necessary as a potent disavowal of Mercantilism, and envisaging mutual benefit in exchange rather than exploitation, as well as more equitable distribution of wealth, according to Schmidt it was nevertheless problematic because it “framed an account of the market that owed much to [Bernard] Mandeville.” The comparison may seem surprising, given that their respective basic assumptions were antagonistic: Mandeville [1670-1733] was an exponent of “Epicurean natural law” and hence of “the theory of the international agreement of hostile, savage men”, whereas “Smith’s fundamental philosophical views are rooted in the Stoic’s theory of a reason which penetrates the world, of the purposiveness of nature, of the harmony of nature and reason, of the human community as a commandment of nature.” (Gustav Schmoller. (John C. O’Brien transl.) “Adam Smith by Gustav von Schmoller,” in: *Review of Social Economy*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (Summer 1991), p. 133). Yet the similarity between Mandeville’s controversial, bestselling “satirical poem ‘The Grumbling Hive or Knaves Turned Honest’, which first appeared in 1705 and subsequently in 1714, 1723, and 1732 as *The Fable of the Bees: or Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, and Smith’s ‘invisible hand’ analogy is nevertheless striking. Mandeville insisted that what moralists had long classified as vices – for example, envy, greed, pride – turned out to be the very things that made society prosper. In other words, when properly channeled, private vices yielded public benefits.” (Schmidt, “The Scottish Enlightenment and the Origins of Social Theory”.)

<sup>61</sup> Friedrich August von Hayek, *The Trend of Economic Thinking. Essays on Political Economicists and Economic History*, in: W.W. Bartley III/Stephen Kresge (eds.). *The Collected Works of F.A. Hayek*. Vol. 3, London: Routledge, 1991, pp. 23-4.

some of the economists of the Historical School and advocates of *Sozialpolitik*, in which the *Volkswirtschaft* is considered as an organic whole, to views that see it merely as an agglomeration of separately operating individual “economies.” It is significant that the existence in the German language of a single word to represent compactly so complex a conception has had considerable bearing on the direction taken by definitions of economic affairs. Many writers defined their subject directly in terms of the study of the *Volkswirtschaft* (hence *Volkswirtschaftslehre*). Thus, such a definition immediately places the accent on the social character of economic activity.<sup>62</sup>

Kirzner’s designation “agglomeration”, rather than “organism” as outcome of “separately operating individual ‘economies’” clarifies the conceptualisation that attends the idea of an ‘invisible hand’, and what is generally known as *laissez-faire* economics. It will be readily apparent that this viewpoint is disavowed in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*. The idea of an agglomeration both assumes inadvertency and recommends the *absence* of conscious agency, including conscience, and the *presence* of self-orientated motivation. By contrast, “organism” assumes integrative processes, rather than inadvertency. In the novel, this concept is clearly apparent in the depiction of an inter-dependent whole, which, however, is viewed to be out of balance. *Conscious* rather than unconscious agency therefore is advocated to establish balance, to be achieved via equal rights.

A high-profile nineteenth-century dispute that has been coined the “Methodenstreit”, and which took place between German and Austrian economists, serves to elucidate the underlying issues further. Erik Grimmer-Solem juxtaposes the Austrian Carl Menger’s views with those of Georg Knapp. Due to the complexity of the issue raised, it is worth quoting at some length:

In practical matters historical economists, Menger claimed, were almost entirely in agreement with ‘progressive liberal politicians’, and worse, with ‘socialists’. This economics was shaped more by ‘outside events’ than by scientific insights [...]. Historical economists were guilty of a ‘one-sided collectivism’ because they wrongly believed in the singular collective entity of the economy of a people or nation (*Volkswirtschaft*), failing to reduce economic action to its basic essential components and to understand that the economic action of private individuals (*Privatwirtschaft*) organically gave rise to the economy of a whole people or nation

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<sup>62</sup> Israel M. Kirzner. *The Economic Point of View: An Essay in the History of Economic Thought*. Kansas City: Sheed Andrews McMeel, 1976. Online version: <[http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com\\_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=304&chapter=5935&layout=html&Itemid=27](http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=304&chapter=5935&layout=html&Itemid=27)>. Accessed 3 October 2012. – Kirzner here refers to the “Historical School of National Economics”. Subsequent discussions will likewise use the abbreviated form “Historical School”.

(*Volkswirtschaft*). *Volkswirtschaft* was thus the same as *Privatwirtschaft*, and not itself a legitimate object of scientific inquiry. [...] The investigation of moral statistics had provided the historical economists with empirical regularities as evidence for the phenomenon of society, which led to the investigation of the sources of that regularity which were posited to be common material constraints, common moral-ethical motivations, and common institutions. In Knapp's view, statistical evidence for this commonality was the reason why 'atomists' always hated statistics such as those of mass poverty or crime because they revealed 'not random individual cases but instead damage and ills on the body of the whole from which no healthy part can view itself as isolated'. Menger may have rejected statistics as a basis for 'exact theory' because it proved evidence for a *Volkswirtschaft* not reducible to *Privatwirtschaft*. Interestingly and ironically, Menger himself admitted that for the study of 'organic' phenomena the 'exact-theoretical' methodology was not sufficient and required the 'empirical-realistic method' for a 'direct view of social phenomena'.<sup>63</sup>

The underlying philosophical issue that emerges both from the methodological divergence and from the terminological opacity is whether "basic essential components" are to be regarded as existing autonomously or relatedly. According to the Historical School, and also in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, the latter is the case. Erik Grimmer-Solem summarises collective conceptual negotiations in Germany of the "period between the 1850s and 1890" as

hostility to Hegelian philosophy, a sceptical receptiveness to positivism, a turn towards Rankean history and the natural sciences, as well as a rebirth of interest in Kant in reconciling empiricism and rationalism. Not surprisingly, Schmoller, Brentano, and many others identified with the so-called 'younger Historical School' were influenced more profoundly by statistical methods than by Romanticism or Hegelian philosophy.<sup>64</sup>

As his previous observations demonstrate, however, the romantic proposition and inductive approach<sup>65</sup> of the younger Historical School<sup>66</sup> are not mutually exclusive in their underlying values and assumptions. The closely related question whether any complex phenomenon – in this case society – is ultimately equal to, or greater than the

<sup>63</sup> Carl Menger and Georg Knapp, quoted in Erik Grimmer-Solem. *The Rise of National Economics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 255.

<sup>64</sup> Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of National Economics*, pp. 31-2.

<sup>65</sup> Grimmer-Solem here emphasises the link between the statistical approach and social research, as well as historical economics. (Cf. Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of National Economics*, p. 32.)

<sup>66</sup> Erik Grimmer-Solem traces the emergence of the Historical School's second phase or 'younger school' as being "between 1860 and 1890". (Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of Historical Economics*, p. 1.) Nicholas Balabkins locates a landmark point of the organisation: "In 1871 [...] a number of renegade German professors set up a new organisation. Their purpose was to clarify the social and labour questions of the day and to propose reform measures. The leading spirit among these young men was Gustav Schmoller, who became the most prominent name among the [...] German Historical School of Economics." (Balabkins. *The German Historical School*. Audiobook. Knowledge Products, Blackstone, 2007.) – The new organisation was the *Verein für Sozialpolitik*, annual meetings of which began in 1873. (Cf. Lujo Brentano. *Mein Leben im Kampf um die soziale Entwicklung Deutschlands*. Jena: Diederichs, 1930, p. 94.) Since this discussion focuses on the late nineteenth century, the designation 'Historical School' is generally used to refer to this younger phase.

sum of its parts is here of crucial significance because it determines the attribution of meaning – the one proposition issues from mechanistic assumptions about reality; the other from teleological ones. Interpretations of consciousness, development and social evolution are fundamentally at variance depending on which view underpins them.

Kaufhold pinpoints how these questions manifested within the Historical School:

[Schmoller's] großer Aufsatz über die Gerechtigkeit [...] stellt über weite Strecken hin die zahlreichen Verstöße gegen die Gerechtigkeit dar, die uns die Geschichtsforschung zeigt. Freilich begnügt sich Schmoller nicht damit, sondern setzt diesem Befund die anhaltenden Bemühungen der Menschen entgegen, zu mehr Gerechtigkeit zu kommen, oder, allgemein gesagt, den gesellschaftlichen Fortschritt zu verwirklichen. [...] Immer ist er überzeugt, im Ergebnis werde das Gerechte, das Gute, der Fortschritt sich durchsetzen. Neben den Realisten tritt also der Optimist Schmoller und beansprucht das letzte Wort für sich. Man kann ein solches Welt- und Menschenbild als wirklichkeitsfremd ansehen – und muß sich dann fragen lassen, wie wirklichkeitsnahe, zum Beispiel, der homo oeconomicus der 'reinen Theorie' ist oder was die Alternative zum Optimismus sei: 'homo homini lupus' als Konsequenz der Gesellschaftsanalyse?<sup>67</sup>

His comments highlight that the answer to profound ontological-conceptual questions, such as those proposed by Darwinian evolutionary theory,<sup>68</sup> is ultimately solvable subjectively rather than objectively, since deductive logic does not suffice to answer them.<sup>69</sup> This viewpoint is helpful when addressing fundamental questions about the literary stature of popular fiction, like that produced by Westkirch and Niese. The modernist discursive penchant for concepts such as chaos, vacuum, disintegrity and pessimism, including in prose fiction, has generally been interpreted as a mark of sophistication, due to its 'stark realism'. But this approbation depends on an implicit

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<sup>67</sup> Karl Heinrich Kaufhold. "Gustav Schmoller (1838-1917) als Historiker, Wirtschafts- Und Sozialpolitiker und Nationalökonom", in: *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (1988), pp. 229-30. – The essay Kaufhold refers to is Gustav Schmoller's "Die Gerechtigkeit in der Volkswirtschaftslehre", which first appeared in *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft*, Vol. 5, 1881. (Cf. also, Gustav Schmoller. *Über einige Grundfragen der Sozialpolitik und der Volkswirtschaftslehre*. 1. *Über einige Grundfragen des Rechts und der Volkswirtschaft*. 1874-75. 2. *Die Gerechtigkeit in der Volkswirtschaft*. 1881. 3. *Die Volkswirtschaft, die Volkswirtschaftslehre und ihre Methode*. 1893. 4. *Wechselnde Theorien und feststehende Wahrheiten im Gebiete der Staats- und Sozialwissenschaften und die heutige deutsche Volkswirtschaftslehre*. 1897. Leipzig: Duncker&Humblot, 1904.)

<sup>68</sup> It is of interest to mention in this context that the conclusions of Alfred Russell Wallace, the Welsh scientist who had independently arrived at identical evolutionary precepts concurrently with Darwin (their theses were initially presented together), did not concur with the latter in respect of his conclusions about human stature and individuality. (Cf. for instance, Wallace. *My Life*, pp. 224-5.)

<sup>69</sup> Carl Jung states the issue succinctly in his chapter "Approaching the Unconscious", which traces the collective effects of the loss of an ability consciously to relate to symbols. As previously highlighted, with regard to religion, he concludes that "we are entirely free to choose which point of view we take; it will in any case be an arbitrary decision" because both religious assertion and atheist denial "can never be proved." (Carl Jung. "Approaching the Unconscious", in: Carl Jung (ed.) *Man and His Symbols*. London: Picador, 1978, pp. 1-95, esp. p. 76; cf. also pp. 83-8.)

acceptance of the mechanistic-evolutionary standpoint, which, while reflecting a contemporary dominant, hegemonic value, does not represent objective fact. The question, therefore, is whether an “emphatically unredeemed presentation of bleak reality”<sup>70</sup> is actually any more sophisticated than the envisioning of, if not potentially simplistic or didactic harmonisation, at any rate, integrative processes that reflect ontological optimism.

The identification of the disparate notions of the “Wesen der Volkswirtschaft” can contribute to a differentiated understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of the Historical School. An essential element of its conceptual legacy is Baader’s social-spiritual synthesis. The historicity of this synthesis in turn elucidates what Kirzner sees as a mere “philological accident”:

The key to the [...] Romantic worldview is the organic idea, the belief that reality is a living whole, all members of which – despite their diverse characteristics and functions – are immediately related to a common center and through that center to each other. With regard to its organicism, there is no question about the utter Romantic quality of Baader’s thought. For him, as for all the Romantics, the concrete living whole provided a means of resolving all abstract antitheses.<sup>71</sup>

The perception of organic inter-relatedness is therefore intrinsic to the historical-economic approach which emerged in mid nineteenth-century Germany. In turn, the proposition made in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* regarding social transformation signals cultural specificity, rather than excessive idealism or utopianism.

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<sup>70</sup> Nicholas Saul. “Wilhelm Jensen and Wilhelm Raabe: Literary Value, Evolutionary Aesthetics, and Competition in the Marketplace,” in: Charlotte Woodford/Benedict Schofield. *The German Bestseller in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Rochester: Camden House, 2012, p. 64.

<sup>71</sup> Betanzos, *Franz von Baader’s Philosophy*, pp. 32-3. – Betanzos goes on to provide an analysis of crucial differences between Baader and other leading lights of Romantic thought, including Rousseau, Jacobi and Fichte. The reference here identifies an aspect of philosophical common ground which does not simplify the heterogeneity of the movement, including in its historical development. (Cf. Betanzos, *Franz von Baader’s Philosophy*, pp. 32-8.)



The novel's envisioning of social justice is locatable not only in Erwin's "wohl ausgeklügelten Exempel" (EMM, p. 74), which points back to historically earlier thinkers. Accused of being a "Sozialdemokrat", he replies "keineswegs" (EMM, p. 86) because to be seen as such at that time meant to be equated with Marxist-inspired revolutionary socialism, whereas the call for reform was a strong socio-political current even after William II had aborted his "Sozialreform", as observed by Ullrich.<sup>72</sup> Erwin's initial reform measures prioritise the removal of outmoded employment practices over the implementation of new initiatives in order first to acknowledge and iterate the workers' dignity:

Kurz vor der Mittagspause rief der Ton einer Glocke, die nur bei besonderen Feierlichkeiten geläutet wurde, sämtliche auf dem Werk anwesende Arbeiter in die Frühstückshalle. Der Raum war zu klein, sie zu fassen; ein Teil drängte sich vor dem Eingang zusammen. Auf einem Tisch vor der geöffneten Thür stehend, verlas Werner, der Chemiker, des Herrn Willen: "Die Arbeitsstunden sind auf dem ganzen Werk auf acht herabgesetzt, drei Schichten in den vierundzwanzig Stunden anstatt zweier. Der Chef begiebt sich seines Rechtes, die Schließung einer Ehe zu beanstanden. [...] Keine politische oder religiöse Überzeugung soll verfolgt werden, die Zeitung keiner Partei den Arbeitern des Werks verboten sein. Niemand, der eines Kameraden Vergehen anzeigt, hat für diese Handlung Beförderung oder Lohn in irgend welcher Form zu erwarten." Wie eine Bombe schlug in die Schar der durch Jahrzehnte geknechteten Männer diese Botschaft [...] sie begriffen nicht. (EMM, pp. 74-5)

A transition from overt commentary to the workers' perspective here occurs in the phrase "des Herrn Willen", which can be seen as ironic, since his will essentially is not to be "Herr". Although attributed to a collective rather than individual mentality, the phrase functions as free indirect speech does: it highlights the workers' perception of the situation as authoritarian while they are informed of the liberalisation of their employment situation, as also demonstrated by their subsequent non-comprehension. It further underscores the narratorial belief that reforms must be led from above, rather than proceeding at the workers' behest, which would be "planlos, verderbendrohend" (EMM, p. 87), to call to mind Pascal's observation that "the fact that pieces of FIS are intertwined with the objective narrative also means that the subjective responses are

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<sup>72</sup> Cf. Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 189.

ordered within the narrator's overriding perspective."<sup>73</sup> The thematic complex of a rigidified past versus the potentials of a new, progressive era are reflected in the contemporaneous political and socio-economic arena.

Erik Grimmer-Solem notes that the work of the "Historische Schule der Nationalökonomie", which had maintained a high-profile campaign for worker protection regulations from the outset, was one of the cogent contexts of Chancellor Bismarck's resignation:

Despite setbacks before 1890, worker protection legislation was not brought entirely to a halt. And it even played a role in Bismarck's resignation, since such legislation had the support of the young Emperor William [...]. The first signs of a 'new course' in social policy were given in an Imperial message of November 1888 to the Reichstag. In January 1890 at a meeting of the Crown Council, William elaborated these ideas in greater detail [...] Bismarck's continued opposition to this became a major source of conflict with the new emperor, especially after William took the initiative to spell out his ambitions in two Imperial decrees of February 1890, which [Gustav] Schmoller [...] welcomed as ushering in a 'new epoch of German social policy'. After continued friction over this and constitutional matters, Bismarck handed in his resignation in March of 1890.<sup>74</sup>

Bismarck's resignation and the "sozialreformische Eifer Wilhelms II"<sup>75</sup> coincided with "systematic and detailed expression [...] in the Jahrbuch in 1890"<sup>76</sup> of the belief that "enterprise could be shaped to reflect political democratisation and legal equality."<sup>77</sup> Specific reforms implemented by Erwin Relling resonate with and exceed the February decrees of William II (cf. EMM, pp. 75, 88-9, 121), and his utterance "mein Plan ist [...] dies Werk einer Genossenschaft der darin Beschäftigten zu übergeben" (EMM, p. 362) signals his democratic orientation.

Grimmer-Solem further evaluates the public impact of the Historical School, then headed by Gustav Schmoller:

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<sup>73</sup> Pascal, *The Dual Voice*, p. 116.

<sup>74</sup> Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of Historical Economics*, p. 221-2.

<sup>75</sup> Brentano, *Mein Leben*, p. 170.

<sup>76</sup> The publication here referred to is the *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft im Deutschen Reich*, which was edited by Gustav Schmoller and which, after 1913, was renamed *Schmollers Jahrbuch*.

<sup>77</sup> Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of Historical Economics*, p. 236.

Schmoller literally spoke and wrote volumes about the economic, political, and social affairs of Imperial Germany and sought throughout his life to influence events. Far from being isolated in an ivory tower, Schmoller kept his finger on his nation's pulse. His continual public evaluations and comments made him very much a public figure enmeshed in controversies until he died in 1917. He was therefore never only an economist and social reformer but, as Friedrich Meinecke once noted, also a figure whose life and work closely reflected the history of the Empire. The *Verein für Sozialpolitik* that he and his colleagues founded was the most important private fact-finding body within the Empire, often making up for the Reichstag's own investigative deficiencies.<sup>78</sup>

This prominence, which extended to series of articles in the national press,<sup>79</sup> was a dynamic contributory factor in Wilhelmine society, a "Gesellschaft im Übergang".<sup>80</sup> The late nineteenth-century German socio-economic arena was composed not only of two oppositional discourses; the dichotomy was modified by a *significant* third factor, characterised by its advocacy of a middle way. On the one hand, political conservatism and capitalism based in *laissez-faire* practice<sup>81</sup> had spawned a diametric opposite in

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<sup>78</sup> Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of Historical Economics*, p. 12. The implicit reference to accusations that Schmoller operated within an "ivory tower" here refers to the German business community's hostile reaction to Schmoller's anti *laissez-faire* recommendations, as noted by Nicholas Balabkins: "Before 1870, *laissez-faire* was almost the rule throughout the German states. [...] In this milieu, Schmoller said that not all regulation is evil; that governmental interference is sometimes necessary and can take many forms. Schmoller felt that occasionally government agency has to interfere in the market, that government must protect small businesses and economically weak segments of the population from the strong, greedy and unscrupulous sections of the business community. The German business community reacted vigorously to Schmoller's book and denounced him as a Kathedersozialist, in other words, a lecture socialist, or a socialist of an academic chair. A similar modern term would be a 'bleeding heart academic'." (Cf. Balabkins, *The German Historical School*.)

<sup>79</sup> Cf. For instance, Gustav Schmoller. "Über Wesen und Verfassung der großen Unternehmungen", in: *Zur Social- und Gewerbepolitik der Gegenwart*. Leipzig, 1890, pp. 372-440. Schmoller first gave this text as a speech in 1889 and thereafter "published [it] in a series of articles in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*." (Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of Historical Economics*, p. 237.)

<sup>80</sup> Volker Ullrich. "Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?" Notably, Ullrich enumerates "Nationalökonomie" as one of the ten subjects studied by the eighteen year-old Prince William during his two years at Bonn University from 1877-9. (Volker Ullrich. "Kaiser Wilhelm II. Prinz und Bummelknabe", in: *Zeit Online. Uni-Leben*. 27 Aug 2008. <<http://www.zeit.de/campus/2008/04/ehemalige-prinz-wilhelm>>. Accessed 18 June 2014.) Balabkins observes that due to Schmoller's academic prominence, the study of economics at German Universities in the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century proceeded along empirical and regional/national lines, as championed by the Historical School.

<sup>81</sup> With reference to Germany, Gustav Schmoller notes: "Nowhere did [Adam Smith] find greater and more unconditional followers than in Germany and the United States. In Germany, because the great men, who set up again the Prussian State of 1808-40, could do that only whilst creating a free, commercial society, and then, in the days of Bismarck, because the political unity of Germany was to be created only by economic unity within." (Schmoller, "Adam Smith by Gustav von Schmoller", p. 139.) – Schmoller's essay originally appeared in 1907 in the *Internationale Wochenschrift* and was subsequently republished in 1913. (Cf. Gustav von Schmoller. *Charakterbilder*. Munich/Leipzig: Duncker&Humblot, 1913.) It should be added that its evaluation is complex and demonstrates that Schmoller had studied several of Adam Smith's works in detail. Gavin Kennedy points out that a common but simplistic attribution is that Smith had invented *laissez-faire* economics and notes that the history of the term predates and runs parallel to Smith's invisible hand metaphor. The phrase *laissez nous faire* [leave us alone] had been coined in the seventeenth century in France, when merchants reacted against Jean-Baptist Colbert's "oppressive licensing, inspection and control". It had subsequently been popularised by Marquis d'Argenson, an "active promoter of economic theory and a member of the world's first economics club (salon)", as "*laissez faire*" and thereafter was subject to adaptation, for instance "into the service of the Utilitarian philosophy" by eighteenth-century writer Jeremy Bentham. (Gavin Kennedy. *Adam Smith. A Moral Philosopher and His Political Economy*. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008, pp. 248-9.) Contemporary understandings of *laissez-faire* economics are therefore the result of collective negotiations over time, most notoriously in connection with Social Darwinist ideas in the second half of the nineteenth century, rather than being

the revolutionary socialist ideals inspired by Karl Marx.<sup>82</sup> On the other hand, the Historical School actively sought to mitigate the perceptual incompatibility between these polarised perceptions:

Measured by its influence between German unification and the First World War, one of the most important of the heterodox variants of economics was the so-called 'Historical School'. Historical economics and closely related approaches such as institutionalism [...] survived in parallel with neoclassical economics until well into the 1940s, and in some cases even beyond. The broad appeal of this heterodox approach was its strong statistical and empirical-factual emphasis, its focus on organizational processes and institutional structures, and close connection to social reform and progressive movements. [...] The problems the historical economists addressed related to reducing the tensions and risks accompanying industrialization and urbanization, making a transition from an agrarian to a more interdependent industrial economy, and integrating a growing working class into civil society through social policy.<sup>83</sup>

Balabkins concurs in his concise overview:

For decades, [Schmoller] fought against the political left and the political right. The left, led primarily by Marxists, wanted to revamp the existing social order according to Marxist precepts. These Marxists were intellectuals of many persuasions but very few of them were workers themselves. They were self-appointed spokesmen for the working class. The right consisted primarily of the German laissez-faireists, who were businessmen and some noble reactionaries. Schmoller wanted no bloody revolution, but a step-by-step evolutionary process that would integrate the German working class into the mainstream of German society. He wanted to break down the existing barriers between the various social classes. With this in mind, he served on various committees, drafted legislative proposals, and was a vital member of the *Verein*.<sup>84</sup>

As previously identified, the sentiments and socio-political aims identified by Grimmer-Solem and Balabkins are directly mirrored in the main protagonist of *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, who is a reformer with the aim of breaking down existing barriers between the various social classes, who would have the proletariat receive not only work-related training but “die Muße und Mittel [...] [die] Kultur kennenzulernen” (EMM, p. 87). The Historical School, through its prominence and conceptual stature emerges as noteworthy and viable minority voice and constitutes one of the moments capable of development identified by Ullrich.<sup>85</sup> In *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, such a moment is

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enshrined in Smith's economic doctrine. Schmoller's effort is to contextualise Smith's treatise *Wealth of Nations* by pointing out the historicity of the assumptions that underpin it; he thereby disputes its universal validity.

<sup>82</sup> For the relationship between *laissez-faire* concepts, nineteenth-century capitalism and the rise of communist ideas, cf. also Skousen, *The Big Three*, pp. 64-5.

<sup>83</sup> Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of Historical Economics*, p. 3.

<sup>84</sup> Balabkins, *The German Historical School*.

<sup>85</sup> Ullrich, “Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?”

presented in narrative form: the conservative status quo is presented as no longer viable, having brought about a social crisis the resolution of is either revolution from 'below' and reform from 'above'.

The *political* prominence of the Historical School is shown in the fact that the post-Bismarck government included an active member of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik*.<sup>86</sup> Protective social legislation rapidly ensued in the so-called "Lex Berlepsch":

[Hans von] Berlepsch himself would chair the first International Conference for Worker Protection held in Berlin in March 1890, which, though not leading to much international cooperation, gave impulse to the reforms of the industrial code passed in June 1891 [...] The new provisions prohibited Sunday work, the factory employment of children under 13 years, and regulated the working hours of youths under 16 years to ten hours and women to eleven hours a day.<sup>87</sup>

*Ein moderner Märtyrer* in this respect points the way by going further: "die Arbeitsstunden sind auf dem ganzen Werk auf acht herabgesetzt" (EMM, p. 75) because the labourers need time "zum Schlafen, für ihre Reinlichkeit, für ihre Mahlzeiten, ihre Ausbildung, das Leben mit ihren Familien (EMM, p. 39). Due to its political prominence, the vision and aims of the Historical School would have been perceived both as inspirational and *viable* in the late nineteenth century Germany. Historical economists' tireless efforts to reach a public audience meant that *Sozialpolitik* ideals were readily accessible to authors of bourgeois origin involved in writing socially critical narratives that aimed at a new middle class demographic, such as Luise Westkirch. In this context, it is also of interest to note that Bismarck, at the time of his resignation, was viewed with ambivalence, rather than with unqualified opposition by members of the Historical School. Although Schmoller voiced his perception that Bismarck was a retarding element in the speed of social reform,<sup>88</sup> with Germany in 1890 being "well behind the rest of western Europe, even Austria, on

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<sup>86</sup> Johannes Miquel was the new Prussian Minister of Finance and an active member of the *Verein's* standing committee. The post-Bismarck Reichstag further included Hans von Berlepsch as Minister of Trade, and Karl Heinrich von Boetticher as vice president of the Ministry of State.

<sup>87</sup> Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of Historical Economics*, p. 222.

<sup>88</sup> Gustav Schmoller. "Die beiden kaiserlichen Erlasse vom 4. Februar 1890 im Lichte der deutschen Wirtschaftspolitik von 1866-1890", in: *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft im Deutschen Reich*. Vol. 14 (1890), p. 698.

factory inspection and health and safety regulations”,<sup>89</sup> Lujo Brentano describes mixed feelings:

Einerseits bedrückte es, daß der Lotse das Schiff verließ, das er wie keiner durch alle Klippen gesteuert hatte. Andererseits waren wir uns bewußt, daß mit ihm der gewaltigste Gegner der Sozialpolitik, die wir erstrebten, geschwunden war.<sup>90</sup>

In *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, notably, the portrayal of a conservative past proceeds not only in the form of the tyrannical propensity and perceptual rigidity of Relling senior. The conservatively-minded Oswald Hadeln, who acts more by habit than by design, serves to mitigate the censorious view of the immediate political past. By relativising the old order, the impression of black-and-white polemics is ameliorated. One effect of this added layer is the sub-textual, as well as overt portrayal of a society that is in need, as well as potentially capable, of transformation.

The narrative mood of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* reflects the sense that the historical moment offered unusual potential for development. The tension between past and future is encapsulated in a dialogue between Erwin Relling and Hadeln, in which the latter admonishes the former:

“Sie wissen gar nicht, was Sie gesündigt haben. An Ihres Vaters Institutionen, die Sie leichtherzig niederreißen, besaß die ganze Provinz ein Bollwerk gegen die Sozialdemokratie.” “Das giebt’s jetzt nirgends in der Welt.” “Ja, es ist eine schauderhafte Zeit.” “Es ist eine große Zeit! Eine Frühlingszeit des Werdens! Neue Gedanken, neues Keimen, neues Wachsen und Wollen überall. Alle Verhältnisse brechen die Jahrhunderte lange Erstarrung.” (EMM, p. 88)

Political commentary here extends to critique, not of a recent but of a long-lasting, rigid traditionalist past, which was epitomised in Bismarck’s rule and ended with his resignation. While Erwin reflects the social optimism engendered by the repressive chancellor’s removal from office, conservatively-minded Oswald Hadeln is mildly ridiculed, albeit without being ultimately robbed of his dignity. Treatment of this character is noteworthy, since it includes both poetic realist and naturalistic features. In naturalistic fashion, heredity is emphasised, to provide a psychologically buffering effect

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<sup>89</sup> Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of Historical Economics*, p. 220.

<sup>90</sup> Brentano, *Mein Leben*, p. 156.

that prevents this character's exemplification. His mother is referred to as having belonged to an old aristocratic lineage; his father had been a bourgeois industrialist. Oswald is "seines Vaters echter Sohn, ein stämmiger Mann mit rotem Gesicht und faserigem Schnurrbart" who greets his neighbour with "derber Herzlichkeit" (EMM, pp. 83-4). It is worth at this point briefly to return to a comparison between *Ein Moderner Märtyrer* and *Der Untertan*: both narratives present *Wirtschaftsbürger* as problematically invested in the status quo and the effect of generic parameters on the respective portrayals of these morally average characters is striking. In *Der Untertan*, condensed narration of Diederich's formative emotional learning foregrounds milieu and backgrounds temperament; the main protagonist's implacability and emotional inadequacy are the result of the familial and social environment. In particular, his failure to effect ethical choices in adult life is attributed to his early experience of his father, which occupies the initial part of this narrative. Even where heredity is alluded to, it is subordinated to the effects which the environment has: "er fühlte gar keine Achtung vor seiner Mutter. Ihre Ähnlichkeit mit sich selbst verbot es ihm."<sup>91</sup> The psychologically dominant relationship with his father instead provides the portrayal of an amalgam of contradictory emotions around puerile perceptions of power, in which love and hate become synonymous. The child's burgeoning sado-masochism is poignantly shown, on the one hand in his desire for corporal punishment from his father. On the other, "als der Vater einmal mit seinem invaliden Bein die Treppe herunterfiel, klatschte der Sohn wie toll in die Hände – worauf er weglief" (DU, p. 5) demonstrates the – consequential – pathology of the love-hate amalgam, in which the problematically adored abuser's abasement is met with a moment of involuntary, approving passion. Diederich's unconscious personality structure belies the absence of self-respect and at the same time creates a perpetual, pressing anxiety around self-preservation – "er achtete sich selbst nicht, dafür ging er mit einem zu schlechten Gewissen durch sein Leben" (DU, p. 7). His persona thus is constructed around what may be termed a negative father-complex, which is echoed in the societal norms he espouses as his life values. His

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<sup>91</sup> Heinrich Mann. *Der Untertan*. Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1964, pp. 5,6. (Henceforth: DU)

maternal heredity, which by contrast is outlined as an imaginative, sensitive temperament, albeit one that in turn is cowed and distorted,<sup>92</sup> remains throughout his life a non-effective alter-ego, which cannot redeem him at crucial moments.<sup>93</sup> In consequence, this profound and satirising character study has a two-dimensional aspect that is as implacable as the character whose portrayal is its objective<sup>94</sup> – it is relentless, and creates a sense of inescapability.

By contrast, Oswald Hadeln is not similarly broken down by his familial and social environment. As already mentioned, his heredity is emphasised; he takes after his father. He is caught up in and endorses the socio-economic common consensus, but his individual potentiality or freewill, while viewed as strictured, is not categorically denied – if Erwin appears to him as a “Phantast”, he nevertheless recognises him to be “anständig bis unter die Haut” (EMM, p. 353). In terms of balancing heredity and environment, the narrative resembles Emile Zola’s project.<sup>95</sup> Hadeln’s character

<sup>92</sup> Distortion is eloquently portrayed in the mother’s relationship to the child, which includes disingenuous emotions and displaced anger at her own oppression: “Sie betete mit dem Kind ‘aus dem Herzen’, nicht nach Formeln, und bekam dabei gerötete Wangenknochen. Sie schlug es auch, aber Hals über Kopf und verzerrt von Rachsucht” (DU, p. 6).

<sup>93</sup> The episode which particularly evidences the breakdown of the ability to feel, whether love or responsibility, is Diederich’s love affair with Agnes, whom he impregnates and eventually refuses to marry on account of her agreement to their premarital affair. The relationship trajectory sees Diederich oscillate between his own vulnerability on account of his genuine affection for his lover, and his overpowering aversion to being vulnerable. His ultimate disavowal of feeling finally allows him to perceive himself as in a position of power, which he expresses by rejecting Agnes and by humiliating her father, who comes to confront him. (Cf. DU, pp. 52-76, esp. pp. 67-8, 69, 71-5.)

<sup>94</sup> It is worth noting that Lilian Furst and Peter Skrine identify German naturalism as influenced by “Ibsen and Tolstoy [...] Dostoevsky and Strindberg” and “sharply divided” on Zola, particularly with regard to his theoretical espousal of “temperament”. Notwithstanding its heterogeneous manifestation, German naturalism is here further acknowledged as related to native literary tradition, especially “the politically activist *Jungdeutschland* movement.” (Lilian R Furst/Peter N. Skrine. *Naturalism*. London: Methuen & Co., 1971, pp. 38-9.) Given that the style of *Der Untertan* includes emphatic backgrounding of temperament while evidencing an implicit, yet emphatic social activist assumption through its foregrounding of social malaise and its employment of satirical technique, Mann’s self-identification with the French naturalistic school of naturalism seems curious; *Der Untertan*, rather, appears to bear hallmarks identified by Furst and Skrine as uniquely German. (For a discussion of France, cf. Furst/Skrine, *Naturalism*, pp. 24-31; for German characteristics, cf. pp. 37-41.)

<sup>95</sup> Naomi Schor elaborates on Zola’s focus on the individuals of a family, and the family itself as a social group. She quotes his interest in “solving the twin problems of temperament and environment” and in showing the “[family] group as an actor in a historical epoch.” (Henri Mitterand. *Emile Zola. Les Rougon-Marquart*, quoted in: Naomi Schor. *Zola’s Crowds*. Baltimore/London: John Hopkins University Press, 1978, pp. 136-140, here p. 137.) Although Zola’s early volumes tend to portray heredity as deterministic, and are therefore pessimistic about the scope of freewill, this narratorial position does not remain static. The denial of freewill of the protagonists of *Therese Raquin* (cf. Emile Zola. *Therese Raquin*. France: Lacroix, 1867) for instance, is not as categorically represented in such characters as Etienne in *Germinal* (cf. Emile Zola. *Germinal*. Paris: Charpentier, 1885). Likewise, volumes that occur later in the Rougon-Marquart cycle do not uniformly subscribe to fatalism that gives rise to endings constellated as inevitable. As an example of a resilient character may be mentioned the protagonist Denise in *Au bonheur des*



portrayal, however, is ultimately achieved by a synthesis of naturalistic and what Moritz Baßler identifies as an aspect of poetic realist procedure. This procedure involves effecting *modified* satire, which avoids manoeuvring a subject figuratively beyond redemption. In a discussion of Wilhelm Raabe's novella *Zum wilden Mann*,<sup>96</sup> Baßler notes the use of mocking elements in the character treatment of protagonist Kristeller:

So sieht er aus, der poetisch-realistische Held. Er lebt zusammen mit seiner älteren Schwester, einem "Altjungferngesicht" mit schriller Stimme und "einem über jeden höflichen Zweifel erhabenen Buckel zwischen den Schultern. Fehlt nur noch der Lehnstuhl, dann wäre das Spitzweg'sche Genrebild perfekt, eine Karikatur, die mindestens Max und Moritz nötig hätte, um überhaupt noch ein Narrativ aus ihr herauszuschlagen zu können. Niedergetretene Pantoffeln, Hauskappe, Maikäfer [...]"<sup>97</sup>

The impression of incongruity, however, is ameliorated, as he observes further:

Die poetische Welt repräsentiert hier [...] nicht das zeitgenössische Diskursuniversum, sondern grenzt sich davon ab. Andererseits gibt Raabe seine Helden aber auch nicht der Lächerlichkeit preis. Kristellers Welt steht also keineswegs einfach karikierend für die in ridiküler Weise limitierte Welt des Spießbürgers.<sup>98</sup>

*Sozial-* and *Zeitromane* such as those of Niese and Westkirch are of course constructed conversely to the poetic realist parameter of avoiding the discourse corpus of the time. The portrayal of characters such as Valeska Bardenfleth in *Licht und Schatten* or the Hadelns in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, who are self-indulgently oblivious to all but their immediate circumstances and personal privileges, rather, itself draws attention to a social problem. In terms of character treatment, however, the poetic realist parameter is observable: while Hadeln's limited, inherited bourgeois outlook is steadily mocked, the satirical element is offset by a capacity for reflective motives and responses.

Hadeln's authoritarian business practice and lack of empathy causes a psychologically schizoid situation in his sugar processing plant, in which worker and employer have no

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dames, who consistently resists impositions, including peer pressure (cf. Emile Zola. *Au bonheur des dames*. Paris: Les Ed. Parisiennes [1880]).

<sup>96</sup> Wilhelm Raabe. *Zum wilden Mann. Eine Erzählung*. Leipzig: Reclam, [1884].

<sup>97</sup> Moritz Baßler. "Figurationen der Entsagung", in: Dirk Götsche/Ulf-Michael Schneider (eds.) *Jahrbuch der Raabe-Gesellschaft* 2010. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2010, p. 63.

<sup>98</sup> Baßler, "Figurationen der Entsagung", p. 71.

regard for each other. He privately dismisses their physical discomfort while hyperbolically commenting on his own:

“Zu heiß war’s ihnen in den Siedereien, zu heiß! Die Luft nicht gut genug. Bessere Ventilation verlangten sie. ‘S war um die Motten zu kriegen. So ‘ne Anstellerei!”  
Jählings fuhr der Zürndende herum, rot im Gesicht wie ein ergrimter Puter.  
“Florence, hast du hier einheizen lassen? Bei der Hitze! So ‘ne Unvernunft! [...] Die Fenster auf! Ich erstickte. Ich schmore!” (EMM, pp. 84-5)

He is, further, obsessively concerned with his workers’ thieving practices (cf. EMM, pp. 79, 84-5, 353) to emphasise the mutuality of disregard – incongruity is here constructed by compounding and juxtaposing contrasts in satirical fashion. On the other hand, he remains capable of distinguishing value outside of the employment situation. Hadeln is a steadfast and affectionate friend to Erwin at times of crisis (cf. EMM, pp. 178-9, 214, 241-3) , who later visits him as neighbour and good fellow, because he is inordinately fond of him.<sup>99</sup> He is ultimately able to discriminate when he proves an opponent to the ironwork’s ambitious engineer Fahrke (cf. EMM, pp. 278, 353-4), whom he initially admires as a “famoser Kerl” (EMM, p. 227) on account of his ability to quell the rebellious workers. The effect of such a contradictory portrayal is mitigation. Baßler quotes Raabe to posit that it is the “zweite Hauptfunktion der poetisch-realistischen Entsagung [...] den Zynismus zu verhindern”:

Mit den Worten von Vetter Just in *Alte Nester*: ‘warten, warten muß man – heute wie morgen – auf das, was mit einem geschieht: in das Glück kann sich kein Mensch unterwegs retten, so fallen die Besten und Edelsten in die Entsagung, um nicht dem Verdruß zu verfallen.’ Das ist die poetisch-realistische Haltung, eine Haltung, der sich sicher auch heute noch manches abgewinnen läßt [...] es ist definitiv keine Haltung der Moderne.<sup>100</sup>

*Ein moderner Märtyrer*, as *Sozialroman*, does not ultimately promote the idea of an attitude of renunciation in order to bide time and thus preserve integrity<sup>101</sup> – rather, it presents a complex and extended challenge to dominant discourse parameters, as will be seen. The ambivalent note which attends the portrayal of Hadeln functions to qualify

<sup>99</sup> “Er besuchte ihn ab und zu [...] als Nachbar und guter Kerl” [...] “Ich hab’ einen Narren an dir gefressen” (EMM, p. 278).

<sup>100</sup> Wilhelm Raabe, quoted in: Baßler, “Figurationen der Entsagung”, p. 80.

<sup>101</sup> Such a stance appears to be presented as a temporary gesture in respect of Erwin’s position after the workers’ revolt: “Beneidenswert, wem Himmelsgabe vergönnt durch Thaten zu wirken. Wem sie’s nicht vergönnt, der wirke durch Dulden” (EMM, p. 283). It does not signal an attitude of retreat, however, but rather, challenges the idea that only heroic action has value and effect.

the implacability that is attributed to Relling senior, and thus to the *Wirtschaftsbürger*-led status quo. Unlike Diederich in *Der Untertan*, Hadeln, who is attended by partially comical contradictions, can still be related to, and potentially negotiated with. He symbolises a negative status quo that is transformable, rather than ripe only to be overturned: the relativisation of a political past, which, while responsible for the perpetration of social injustice, yet retains a 'human face'.

The use of modified satire, however, ultimately does not preclude fundamental critique. A light-hearted tone is maintained in respect of Hadeln until near the conclusion, when unexpectedly, the serious import of its intended social critique is revealed. In the portrayal of a social gathering, hosted by Hadeln for fellow entrepreneurs, guests follow, surreptitiously yawning, the motion of the hands on the mantelpiece clock (cf. EMM, p. 376):

Es war ein Dutzendfest, ohne Wärme, ohne Physiognomie, die Herren ausgezeichnet durch rundliche Fülle und Portemonnaies; die Frauen kostspielig, aber nicht sonderlich geschmackvoll gekleidet; alte Weine, alte Witze; viel leibliche Kost und wenig geistige. (EMM, p. 372-3)

A materialistic *Wirtschaftsbürgertum* here appears as added confirmation of the unviability of the existing social order, which is a plight in itself, since ownership of material wealth bestows nothing of value. The narrative viewpoint therefore is not limited to compassion for the oppressed, but includes an examination of the effect of the established status quo on the upper societal strata as well. The *Wirtschaftsbürgertum* is aristocratically-connoted: social gatherings include "Fabrikanten und Gutsbesitzer" (EMM, p. 307) and "Großindustrielle" include those who are "Jagdliebhaber" who discuss hounds (cf. EMM, p. 375). Their mentality is depicted overall as, to quote Heinrich Mann, "nicht Bürger, nicht Junker, aber beides in einem [...] ein Wesen mit Sporen und einem Zahlengehirn".<sup>102</sup> The presentation of their social

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<sup>102</sup> Heinrich Mann, quoted in: Volker Ullrich. "Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?" <<http://www.zeit.de/zeitgeschichte/2010/04/Das-Essay/seite-1>>. Although both Mann's observation and narrative constructions that occur in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* imply some psychological incorporation of aristocratic mores into the late nineteenth-century "wirtschaftsbürgerliche Oberschicht", this does not necessarily signal confirmation of the "lange vorherrschende These von einer *Feudalisierung* des deutschen Großbürgertums", which

life functions to underpin the novel's social vision. Portrayal of the upper class is achieved through contrasting narrative techniques: overtly scathing or heated commentary, added to the earnestness pertaining to social visionary Erwin, would here have produced a potentially counter-productive moralistic overtone. The diegetic effect of intermittent satirical scenes and subsequent description of the bourgeoisie itself as societal symptom, however, is to validate the main protagonist's ambition. In respect of the character portrayal of Oswald Hadeln, control of incongruity through use of both naturalistic and poetic realist precepts serves the purpose of a psychological realism that strives to constellate the synthesis of a personality who is a contradictory whole. The result is fundamental critique that is psychologically *contained* – it avoids prioritisation of the “shadow”,<sup>103</sup> which tended to be a preoccupation of purely naturalistic narratives. By analogy, society is reflected in the same manner: even its excesses remain included in what amounts to a narratorial equivalent of the organicist perception of the Historical School and its conceptual predecessors.

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Ullrich substantially qualifies, to refute the attribution of a predisposition to the “Absturz in die Barbarei des Nationalsozialismus” on account of a “Defizit an Bürgerlichkeit”, which attends it. (Cf. Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 281.)

<sup>103</sup> C.J. Jung's complex psychological phenomenon of the shadow is elucidated in terms of cultural analogy and natural imagery by John Conger: “The light is often seen as reason, order, that which conforms, stands forward, looks good, relates easily to other parts, is scientific, empirical, predictable, understood, generally agreed on, immediately available, civilized, in balance, the right hand, structure, sanity, the face of things, the Apollonian, the leaves, branches, and trunk of the tree. The shadow, in contrast, is imagined, unseen, primitive, archaic, instinctual, primordial, unpredictable, confused, rebellious, unstructured, unaccepted, unrelated, uncivilised, unstable, unavailable, mad, the left hand, the antithetical mask, the Dionysian, the underside of things [...] the roots of the tree.” (John Conger. *Jung and Reich. The Body as Shadow*. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2005, p. 87.)

## Individuality and Gender in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*

### Individuality as An Intrinsic Value

As previously highlighted, individuality and gender form an essential thematic complex of *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, but its importance can be missed because it is woven inextricably into the overt concern of the storyline, that of social reform. This chapter will argue that the novel derives its deepest significance from covert philosophical and psychological referentialities that substantiate the social agenda by identifying and challenging dominant discourse parameters. It will, further, contend that some of the concerns it raises are as vital today as they were in the late nineteenth century.

Individuality is first signalled as a central concern after Erwin's reverie about the rift between himself and his father at the beginning of the narrative. The value of Erwin's philanthropic stance is asserted to underline the novel's emancipatory message:

Aus den blöden Herden gehorchender Sklaven erhebt sich schon hie und da ein menschliches Antlitz mit eigenen, nur ihm gehörigen Zügen, und seine vom Boden frei erhobenen Blicke sprechen: das bin ich, ich! Keine Zahl, keine Nummer, ein Etwas von eigener Art, ein Kunstwerk, das in der ganzen Schöpfung so nur ein einziges Mal vorkommt; als solches sollt ihr mich anerkennen und meine Eigenart achten! (EMM, p. 4)

Omniscient narration is here used to equate individuality, envisioned for the proletariat, with human dignity. This dignity is expressed in the silent self-respect of a countenance that is raised "vom Boden", which claims uniqueness in regard to itself. This uniqueness is derived neither from achievement, nor dependent on social approval: it is referenced in "Schöpfung", or nature, a characteristic of which is the uniqueness of every manifestation. The narrative develops its unequivocal commentary in respect of inalienable right<sup>1</sup> and, further, constructs resistant practice by implicitly asserting the

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<sup>1</sup> The notion of intrinsic value and right versus quantifiable worth is a beleaguered theme in German history, as previously discussed in respect of Charlotte Niese's, as well as Ludwig Ganghofer's and Eugenie Marlitt's fiction (cf. "Charlotte Niese and *Heimatliteratur*. Variations of a Genre", p. 155, where it

potential stature of marginalised viewpoints. In a notable teleological turn, the young, altruistic industrialist appears as a spontaneous response to a newly emergent collective need, constellated by a time that is still in its infancy (cf. EMM, p. 4). The vision of a social evolution defined by progress towards egalitarian systems is therefore reciprocal with the notion and development of individuality. The external perspective continues to describe both Erwin's character and to outline the social alternatives envisaged:

Jetzt stand einer [...] der Gottes Abbild sah in jedem unter die Füße getretenen Knecht, dessen Seele ein neues Paradies zu schaffen sich vermaß aus diesem modernen Bagno, eine Stätte maßvoller Freiheit, geistigen Emporstrebens, tüchtiger Arbeit und reiner, menschlich edler Freude; der die ihm zugefallene reiche Erbschaft nicht ansah als eine Quelle der Lust für sich, vielmehr als eine schwerlastende Pflicht. (EMM, p. 7)

Ideals here attributed to Erwin incorporate culturally specific behaviours, such as the Protestant notions of moderation, aspiration, a stout work ethic and an idea of joy that possesses human dignity due to its consequent purity.<sup>2</sup> Inclusion of the Italian term “bagno” introduces the dual imagery of a sweat-bath and communal prison for slaves to align the concept of modern social injustice with ancient, ostensibly disowned, practices. The analogy serves to level the accusation that barbaric conditions continue to exist in modern business practice. Envisaged transformation from an enforced communality of sweated labour to a specified ideal here serves to underline the notion of controlled reform from degradation to ennoblement, in contrast to the revolutionary impetus, which is seen to arise from anguish and rage, rather than individuality.

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figures as the tension between the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. Notably, it is transformed in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*: applied to the proletariat and involved in a socially progressive discourse, narratorial ambivalence, in which resentment, envy and emulation can coincide, no longer occurs. Instead, in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, the theme is transposed to form an aspect of philosophically-based social critique.

<sup>2</sup> Max Weber notes the Protestant emphasis on aspiration and activity: “Die Arbeit ist zunächst das alterprobte asketische Mittel, als welches sie in der Kirche des Abendlandes [...] von jeher geschätzt war. Sie ist namentlich das spezifische Präventiv gegen alle jene Anfechtungen, welche der Puritanismus unter dem Begriff ‘unclean life’ zusammenfaßt [...]”. The egalitarian trend of Protestantism, compared to Catholic social complacency, which Franz von Baader also challenged, here also becomes clear: “Der paulinische Satz: ‘Wer nicht arbeitet, soll nicht essen’, gilt bedingungslos und für jedermann. Deutlich zeigt sich hier die Abweichung von der mittelalterlichen Haltung. Auch Thomas von Aquin hatte jenen Satz interpretiert. Aber nach ihm ist die Arbeit nur naturali ratione notwendig zur Erhaltung des Lebens des einzelnen und der Gesamtheit. Wo dieser Zweck wegfällt, zessiert auch die Geltung der Vorschrift. Sie trifft nur die Gattung, nicht jeden einzelnen. Wer ohne Arbeit von seinem Besitz leben kann, auf den bezieht sie sich nicht, und ebenso steht natürlich die Kontemplation als eine geistliche form des Wirkens im Gottesreich über dem Gebot in seiner wörtlichen Auslegung.” (Max Weber. *Die protestantische Ethik*. Cologne: Anaconda, 2009, pp. 142-3. – The first edition appeared in the journal *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, Vol 20/21, Tübingen, 1905.)

Further, despite the cultural specificity of the passage, a universal theme emerges – the meaning and use of power. Erwin's view of his inheritance as duty, rather than as advantage and vehicle for self-gratification constellates two fundamental semantic synonyms: power is equated with service, and individuality with responsibility. This thematic complex is developed throughout the novel, both to acknowledge and to defy the ramifications of a "Machtanbetung", which is viewed as obsolete.

The intended significance of the term "Märtyrer", used to describe Erwin's character and fate throughout the narrative trajectory, is signposted by the use of an assertion by Friedrich Nietzsche, which prefaces the narrative. It serves as its "motto":

Es giebt in der Weltgeschichte kein eigentlich wichtigeres Thema als die uralte Tragödie von den Märtyrern, die den Sumpf bewegen wollen (EMM, p. 1).<sup>3</sup>

The "Sumpf", or quagmire, here references a shared morality as well as social customs, which together constellate a culturally specific consciousness.<sup>4</sup> Use of this imagery in particular identifies and critiques the societal maintenance of harmful behaviour patterns, which are perpetuated because the established moral code endorses them. A thus collectivised consciousness, a concept that can designate both a social or national group and individuals belonging to it, is therefore portrayed not as a manifestation of intelligence or sentience, but as one of stasis and historically conditioned cumulative commonplaces.<sup>5</sup> Nietzsche's deliberations on the same phenomenon in *Menschliches, allzu Menschliches*, publication of which precedes *Morgenröthe* by three years, elucidate its manifestations further. They also describe Erwin's character in terms of function:

Aus der Geschichte ist zu lernen, dass der Stamm eines Volkes sich am besten erhält, in welchem die meisten Menschen lebendigen Gemein Sinn in Folge der Gleichheit ihrer gewohnten und undiscutirbaren Grundsätze, also in Folge ihres gemeinsamen Glaubens haben. Hier erstärkt die gute, tüchtige Sitte, hier wird die

<sup>3</sup> The quotation is taken from "Die Moral des freiwilligen Leidens", in: Friedrich Nietzsche. *Morgenröthe: Gedanken über die moralischen Vorurtheile*. First edition: Chemnitz: Schmeitzner, 1881, p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> The social phenomena repeatedly critiqued by Nietzsche as both bog-like and illusory in "Die Moral des freiwilligen Leidens" are "Sittlichkeit" and "Sitte" of "Gemeinde" and "Völker". Cf. Nietzsche, *Morgenröthe*, pp. 21-3.

<sup>5</sup> Aristotle's rhetorical term is useful here because it emphasises common consensus as a subconscious, rather than cognitive phenomenon.

Unterordnung des Individuums gelernt und dem Charakter Festigkeit schon als Angebinde gegeben und nachher noch anerzogen. Die Gefahr dieser starken, auf gleichartige, charaktervolle Individuen gegründeten Gemeinwesen ist die allmählich durch Vererbung gesteigerte Verdummung, welche nun einmal aller Stabilität wie ihr Schatten folgt. Es sind die ungebundneren, viel unsichereren und moralisch schwächeren Individuen, an denen das geistige Fortschreiten in solchen Gemeinwesen hängt: es sind die Menschen, welche Neues und überhaupt Vielerlei versuchen. [...] Die abartenden Naturen sind überall von grösster Bedeutung wo ein Fortschritt erfolgen soll.<sup>6</sup>

The terms ‘morally weak’ and ‘uncertain’, combined with with ‘unfettered’, or “ungebunden”, here have positive connotations; the idea of weakness, in a context of lack of endorsement by the majority, becomes a virtue. In the narrative context of a new and strident capitalist society, and prevalent assumptions about the inevitability of an unequal, hierarchical social ordering which *Ein moderner Märtyrer* depicts, Erwin demonstrably is a “moralisch schwächere[s] Individu[um]”, and an “abartende Natur”, who unlike the majority cannot admire his father’s “Musterwerk” (EMM, p. 4). The normative force of the collective consciousness, or “Gemeinwesen” – composed of a majority of “gleichartige” personalities who uphold and transmit it – is here implicit as a negative value: the resultant metaphorical “Sumpf” is not receptive to the impact of an *actually* individual, less adapted consciousness; its modus operandi is a non-questioning and self-certain mode of existence. Erwin Relling therefore does not function as a heroic visionary, but rather, represents the individuality posited as missing in the average denizen of society. Appropriation of the highly controversial philosopher Nietzsche for the novel’s “motto” (EMM, p. 1) therefore promises a sub-textual commentary, an engagement with his tenets, which, arguably, is unlikely to lead either to a predictable or, necessarily, to an easily accessible discourse. Yet both contemporaneous and retrospective reviewers’ comments reveal that their expectation of readily apprehended – or even facile – material preconditioned their view of the novel.

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<sup>6</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche. “Anzeichen höherer und niederer Cultur”, in: *Menschliches, allzu Menschliches*. Chemnitz: Ernst Schmeitzner, 1878. Online version: Project Gutenberg-DE. <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3252/7>.> Accessed 12 Dec 2013.



## The Reception of Ein moderner Märtyrer: An Indicative Example

A review of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* appeared in *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung* in 1897. The ambivalently appreciative appraisal evidences its author's perception as limited to the political, and to some extent the psychological, aspects of the novel:

Luise Westkirch ist eine der schärfsten und gewandtesten unter den schriftstellerischen Bekämpferinnen der Socialdemokratie; und zwar bekämpft sie die Socialdemokratie nicht durch Declamation gegen sie oder durch romanhafte Enthüllungen über sie, sondern durch einfache Darstellung der Verhältnisse, wie sie wirklich sind. Dabei steht sie in keiner Weise auf Seite des Kapitalismus; in diesem neuesten Roman sogar ganz ausgesprochen auf der Gegenseite. Denn sie zeigt uns diesmal die Folgen, welche das harte Regiment des Vaters zeitigen muß, nachdem der weichgemuthete Sohn die Herrschaft angetreten hat. Unter dem Vater waren die Arbeiter Hunde an der Kette; der Sohn läßt sie frei, um zu erfahren, daß Kettenhunde, wenn sie plötzlich losgelassen sind, eben die Eigenschaften der freier Menschen auch nicht geschwind gewinnen, nachdem sie "geläutert" sind. Die Masse wird überhaupt nicht geläutert; das wird blos der Einzelne, sei er Arbeiter oder Fabrikherr, Bauer oder König. Hierin steckt die falsche Rechnung dieses Romans.<sup>8</sup>

Since Richard Weitbrecht does not recognise the novel's philosophical discourse, he misunderstands both psychological import and political orientation; thus the plot appears as inadequately realised. The historicity of Weitbrecht's description "Bekämpferin der Socialdemokratie" locates Westkirch within the "bürgerliche Sozialismuskritik".<sup>9</sup> Yet the novel's championing of a third, middle way engenders a

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<sup>8</sup> Richard Weitbrecht. "Aus der Erzählliteratur", in: *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*. Vol. 1, No. 5. Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1897, pp. 74-5. Reviews of prose fiction in this volume further appear under the headings "Historische Romane", "Neue Dramen", "Geschichtliche Romane und Erzählungen", "Dramatische Werke", "Neue Erzählungen und Romane", "Novellen und Romane", "Lyrik", "Neue Romane und Novellen", and "Unterhaltungsliteratur", indicating judgements of reviewed works along parameters of significance and triviality, as well as distinctions by genre. (Cf. for instance, pp. 41, 55, 117, 135, 283, 347.)

<sup>9</sup> Hubert Woltering. "Die 'Sozialistischen Monatshefte 1895/96-1933,'" in: *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Library*. Online version: <<http://library.fes.de/sozmon/070201-smh-begleittext.pdf>, p. 3>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013. – This concept has also been explored by Heidemarie Gruppe and Heide Radeck, who see *Die Gartenlaube* as a vehicle for maintaining the status quo and bourgeois interests as polarised against foundational social change. (Cf. Heidemarie Gruppe. "Volk" zwischen Politik und Idylle in der "Gartenlaube" 1853-1914. Frankfurt/Munich: Peter Lange, 1976 and Heide Radeck. *Zur Geschichte von Roman und Erzählung in der "Gartenlaube" (1853-1914)*. Dissertation: Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, 1967.) It is noteworthy that a more recent description of Westkirch's orientation captures the resonance of her work with the Historical School and with the philosopher Baader, as previously discussed, rather than as a representative of bourgeois morality: "Westkirch zeigt sich in ihren Werken als eine der wenigen Schriftstellerinnen ihrer Zeit, die sich mit sozialen Problemen auseinandersetzen. Sie schildert sowohl die Arbeiterverhältnisse als auch die Auffassung und das Verhalten der Kapitalistenkreise. Sie kritisiert die sich verschärfenden Klassengegensätze und setzt sich vor allem für die Menschenrechte der Arbeiter ein. Die Lösung des sozialen Problems sieht sie in gegenseitiger Nächstenliebe und einer gerechteren Beteiligung der Arbeiter an dem Ertrag ihrer Arbeit. Sie fordert langsame, zielbewußte Reformen unter Erhaltung der bestehenden

more demanding programme; it aims for a resolution of, rather than victory in, this major power struggle. Weitbrecht's misunderstanding in this respect may have arisen because the revolutionary potential of social democracy *is* acknowledged and resisted in this novel, as already discussed. Yet the social democrat Jakob Schmalz, despite his demagoguery (cf. EMM, pp. 93-4, 96-7, 156-7, 338), is not relegated to taboo status within the narrative's value system. He is not used to refute the legitimacy of proletarian rights or the viability of an egalitarian socio-economic system, but rather, to highlight specific problematics within social democracy at that time. Notably, he is another outsider, which in the overall scheme of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* has positive, rather than negative connotations, as has been seen. Before and after his brief phases of employment at the Relling ironworks he is a quasi-romantic vagabond and "Drehorgelspieler" (EMM, pp. 93, 96-7, 335) who roams the country freely, and who is intolerant of restraint. What makes him negative is his irresponsibility – when it comes to politics, he is indiscriminating, aggressively demanding, and puerile (cf. EMM, pp. 110, 157). At the same time, however, he is representative of proletarian disaffection and of inevitable and *justifiable* revolution in the face of accustomed inhumane treatment: "wer an [Relling senior's] Maschinen arbeitet, ist ihm selbst Maschine, Ding, Nummer, - eine Nummer [...] aus der er allen Nutzen preßt, den sie hergeben will" (EMM, pp. 4- 5).<sup>10</sup> Narratorial treatment of this character therefore is more complex than is accessible from a facile reading.

Weitbrecht's negative judgement concerning a lack of "Läuterung" of the proletariat as mass phenomenon is puzzling on the one hand, and revealing on the other. Referring to protagonists who do not actually exist in the novel – the "Bauer [and] König", if intended metaphorically, is not successful because inaccuracy marks the comments

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wirtschaftlichen Ordnung und kapitalistischen Produktionsweise." (Manfred Brauneck (ed.) *Autoren Lexikon Deutschsprachiger Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1988, p. 703.)

<sup>10</sup> Weitbrecht appears likewise unaware as yet of the then emerging revisionism from within the SDP, which was beginning to relativise positions further and to begin to aid the party's *official* move from a radical Marxist position into mainstream politics: "Das [Sozialistische Monatsheft] war – insbesondere in der Zeit der Mitarbeit Eduard Bernsteins 1899 bis 1914 – ein Sprachrohr der wichtigen und durchaus zukunftsweisenden revisionistischen Strömung in der deutschen Sozialdemokratie." (Cf. Woltering, "Die 'Sozialistischen Monatshefte'", pp. 5-6.)

that follow. He complains that while “Läuterung” does not occur in the depicted collective situations, it *does* take place in individual characters. But there is no single individual protagonist who can be described as “geläutert” at the narrative’s conclusion. *Ein moderner Märtyrer* sets out to specify pressing social problems, and addresses them primarily through its psychological and philosophical discourse. Its focus is the formidable difficulties and obstacles attendant on societal – and individual – transformation, rather than an underestimation of them. “Läuterung” of the bourgeoisie or proletariat, in the form of a successfully completed visionary project, would have conveyed didacticism because it would have underestimated collective psychological resistance to social alternatives and prioritised “dichterische Phantasie” over “individuelle Beobachtung des täglichen Lebens”.<sup>11</sup> Erwin, who develops to the greatest extent over the narrative trajectory, is brokenly resigned in respect of personal fulfilment, and at the same time, doggedly persistent regarding his philanthropic social reforms at the finish. The other main characters develop either self-destructively, which will be the subject of the forthcoming discussion, or they show *tentative potential* for change, which may or may not come to be realised, whether this be Oswald Hadeln<sup>12</sup> or workers newly struggling towards emancipation of their own accord. Their potential

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<sup>11</sup> Erich Edler. *Die Anfänge des sozialen Romans und der sozialen Novelle in Deutschland*. Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977, pp. 47-8. – Westkirch was well-known for her milieu studies. Jenny Williamsdon, in her biography of Hans Fallada, incidentally highlights the author’s painstaking observation: “Both of Rudolf [Ditzen]’s parents were interested in literature and there was even evidence of some literary talent in the family: a distant relative, Luise Westkirch, was a moderately successful regional novelist who was famous for travelling fourth class on the railway in order to listen to the language of the ordinary people, which she then reproduced in her work.” (Jenny Williamsdon. *More Lives than One: A Biography of Hans Fallada*. Libris: 1998, p. 2). [Rudolf Ditzgen is Fallada’s birth name]. In *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, milieu study is evident from several detailed descriptions of the ironworks, which include specialised vocabulary in respect of its working processes. During Erwin’s initial inspection, a childhood memory conditions observation and metaphor aids emotional impact: “der Eindruck blieb immer der gleiche: [...] Vier der sechsundfünfzig Öfen der Coakerei wurden eben ‘ausgeschoben’. Aus ihren offenen Thüren rückten langsam die vier Meter hohen Feuerberge hervor, durch einen unsichtbaren Schild an starker Zahnradstange bewegt, schienen sie aus eigener Macht zu wandern, weißglühende Höllenbrände, die gierig umherspürten nach Leibern Verdammter. Und gleich Teufeln, unförmlich anzusehen durch Schutzbleche an Köpfen und Füßen, umsprangen schwarze Gestalten die Flammenkegel. Schauerlich blitzte das Weiße ihrer Augen, vom grellen Feuerschein getroffen, auf; in den Händen schlangen sie fauchende Schlangen, stachelige Skorpione – die langstieligen Eisenhaken, mit denen sie die Glut auseinanderzerrten, die Schläuche der Dampfspritzen, deren zischenden Strahl sie gegen die fertigen Coakes richteten, um sie vor fernem Verglimmen zu bewahren. Die ganze Front des Windhauses und der Hochöfen erschien glutübergossen, wie von bengalischen Flammen bestrahlt; in fahlem, unirdischem Schwarz zeichneten die unbeleuchteten Ecken und Seiten sich in den grauen Himmel. Eine Gicht mußte eben beendet, die Gichtglocke über die Mündung des Hochofens herabgesenkt worden sein, denn bläuliche Flammen schlugen aus der Esse. In der offenen Gießhalle stand das Eisen noch glühend in den Coaquillen, ein weitverzweigtes Netz weißflüssiger Höllenströme” (EMM, pp. 36-7).

<sup>12</sup> As previously indicated, *Ein moderner Märtyrer* subtly signals Hadeln’s capacity for change in his unequivocally positive predisposition towards Erwin despite his resistance to the latter’s ideas about social reform. (Cf. “Social Transformation in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*”, pp. 252, 272-4.)

is asserted through Erwin's perspective: "die qualvolle Vergangenheit war erblichen vor dem Schimmer einer besseren Zukunft" (EMM, p. 304) when the "Gesellen" wish to reinstate a "Fachschule" at their own expense (EMM, p. 302), a facility they had rejected while it was offered for free (EMM, p. 157). The most static characters overall are Fifi Hadeln, the average bourgeois housewife, and Pastor Mahrenholz, "der sein Lebelang [...] sein blühendes Antlitz emporgewandt hatte zu den Reichen und Vornehmen, den Machthabern dieser Welt" (EMM, p. 281). Notably, both are character types who are invested in the status quo because they gain material advantage from it, while also lacking power for change. Since the critic's misunderstanding of political purpose and psychological import here goes hand in hand with deprecation, it is worth next enquiring into the causes of this situation.

#### Alternative Discourse and the Critical Attribution of Triviality

The critical import of Weitbrecht's review is that *Ein moderner Märtyrer* does not merit close attention. His judgements are styled authoritatively: "die falsche Rechnung dieses Romans" implies authorial intentionality, yet his comments do not reflect the narrative's actual content. His concluding remarks are particularly revealing:

[Der Roman] schließt [...] durchaus unbefriedigend; denn die ganze sociale Geschichte dieses Romans wird bei neuer Constellation neu beginnen, und Luise Westkirch wird nothwendig eine Fortsetzung schreiben müssen, dafern sie nicht glaubt, durch sentimentale Entsagungstheorien und weltbeglückende Zukunftspläne des einsamen Fabrikherrn den Lesern genug gethan zu haben. Weibliche Leser werden sich ja wo[h]l damit begnügen; für männliche Leser schwimmt der ganze zweite Theil ins Romanhafte.<sup>13</sup>

These comments illustrate how pre-existing expectations can determine perceptions: criticising the lack of a clear-cut ending is paramount to the demand that a 'minor text' should conform to the critic's expectations of its minority: the novel would have been

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<sup>13</sup> Richard Weitbrecht. "Aus der Erzählliteratur", pp. 74-5.

satisfactory, had it offered a harmonising solution. Further, given the implicitly applied limited aesthetic parameters, the indeterminate ending is interpreted as “Entsagung”, which is negatively connoted. Weitbrecht’s specifically gendered comments are typical of the kind of reception extended to texts by female authors of that time, a situation already discussed in respect of Charlotte Niese’s texts. It is notable that he perceives the novel as composed of two distinct halves, with the first half providing interest for male readers on account of its socio-politically focused dramatic action. The second half, which commences after the workers’ uprising, is taken to be concerned largely or mainly with romantic love, as well as with breakdown and weakness, thus “sentimentale Entsagungstheorien” and “romanhaft” are levelled in respect of it. What is overlooked is not only that traditional, heroically-connoted notions of masculinity are deliberately deconstructed throughout the novel, but also that in the second half, a dual, gendered focus is foregrounded to introduce social conditions that present overwhelming odds to both the novel’s main male and female individualists, Erwin, and previously alluded-to Florence. Weitbrecht therefore inadvertently censors the differentiated societal observations – and indictment – that attends such a predicament. The experience of being conditioned by, of responding relationally to, and of succumbing to implacable odds, is judged as though it were an aesthetic taboo: it is dubbed “sentimental”, semantically synonymous with “trivial”. A critical mind-set governed by patriarchal masculine assumptions, in which the heroic victory over vicissitudes is the indicator of worth, is thereby revealed.

The psychological reality of vulnerability, as well as the theme of suffering are effectively censored when patriarchal standards are applied. At the same time, the concept of feeling remains synonymous with the vagaries of emotion and emotionality, both in critical and colloquial parlance. What is noteworthy in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, however, is the differentiated treatment of *feeling* at a time when collective discourse

mitigated against such a perception<sup>14</sup> because psychological discourse had not yet advanced to distinguish consciously between the two phenomena. James Hillman observes in respect of its development:

I would claim for [Carl Gustav] Jung that he did much for resurrecting feeling and separating it from the collective prejudices. Neither Bleuler nor Freud, the two psychological masters with whom Jung was most closely associated, clearly separated feeling from emotion, from passion, from affectivity. In psychiatric and psychoanalytic literature today the feeling function is still buried in the general category of affectivity, whereas Jung differentiated feeling as a function of consciousness equal to thinking, sensing and intuiting [...] in 1921 in his *Psychological Types*.

Feeling as a function differs from *feelings*. One can have feelings without being able to do much with them, without being able to function feelingly. [...] The feeling function may evaluate thoughts, sense-objects and psychic contents of any kind. It is not restricted to feelings. The feeling function feels (appreciates and relates to) not only feelings.<sup>15</sup>

In *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, “the ability to function feelingly” is a crucial subtext. It appears, for instance, in the evaluative processes that Erwin enters into. He refutes collective notions of success based on profit (EMM, pp. 4-5), traces the failure of his well-intentioned reforms back to his own shortcomings as leader rather than blaming the workers’ ingratitude (EMM, pp. 203-4), and pronounces society’s treatment of women, which causes “gesunde Säfte zu Gift [zu] verbittern und kräftig erkeimte

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<sup>14</sup> As already highlighted, “Emotionalität” was attributed as a specifically female attribute, which in its idealised form was allied with “Güte, Anpassung [...] Rezeptivität”, which, as contingent qualities, however, also denoted female inferiority compared to male strength, autonomy and will. (Cf. Ute Frevert, “Vom Klavier zur Schreibmaschine – Weiblicher Arbeitsmarkt und Rollenzuweisungen am Beispiel der weiblichen *Angestellten* in der Weimarer Republik”, in: Annette Kuhn/Gerhard Schneider (eds.) *Frauen in der Geschichte*. Düsseldorf: Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann, 1970, p. 83-4.) In Weitbrecht’s concluding remark, emotion, a propensity to sentimentality and lack of discrimination are assumed to be self-evidently linked, as well as attributed to women. Further, emotionality, in its non-idealised version, was closely allied with psycho-pathology – it was allied with such conditions as hysteria and kleptomania, as Ronald Fullerton’s research into the latter succinctly demonstrates. His chronological list of “nineteenth century authorities” who reported on kleptomania between 1838 to 1896 shows that the phenomenon had been attributed predominantly to women on account of their susceptibility to irrationality and emotionality. Thus it was termed “lesion of the will” [C.C.H. Marc and Etienne Esquirol, 1838], “hysteria, epilepsy, menstruation, stupidity, and self-love” [Etienne Esquirol, 1845], “depression, epilepsy, moral weakness” [H. Damerow, 1844], “cerebral defects, epilepsy, imbecility” [C. Lasegue, 1880], “inherited mental degeneracy” [Francois Boissier, 1894] and susceptibility to “department store atmospherics” [A. Lacassagne, 1896]. (Cf. Ronald A. Fullerton. “Kleptomania: A Brief Intellectual History”, in: Eric Shaw. *The Romance of Marketing History: Proceedings of the 11th Conference on Historical Analysis and Research in Marketing*. Florida: Association for Historical Research in Marketing, 2003, p. 205.) It will be evident from this brief sketch that the narrative treatment of feeling in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* constitutes what has earlier been highlighted as resistant practice (cf. Josephine Donovan. *European Local-Color Literature: National Tales, Dorfgeschichten, Romans Champêtres*. New York: Continuum, 2010, pp. xi, 4, 7). The polarisation here, of course, is not between “rational, deductive thought-processes [which] are held to be superior in modernity” in contradistinction to “local knowledges”, but between the former and the arguably still more relegated phenomenon of *feeling* as consciousness function, rather than as component of (gendered) irrationality.

<sup>15</sup> Marie-Louise von Franz/James Hillman. *Jung’s Typology*. New York: Spring Publications, 1971, pp. 83, 86.

Pflanzen zu wüsten" (EMM, p. 91), a travesty. His apparently effeminate sensibility causes him to hate "Lärm, Aufläufe, Raufereien, Betrunkene" (EMM, p. 110, 194-6), and to refuse to enlist the army against the workers when they revolt (EMM, pp. 203-4). It is also the perceptive quality that determines his social activism. Jungian analyst Julian David relates feeling, as function, to lived experience:

Feeling discriminates value. A good heart is a good discrimination of what is valuable and what is not. We could say that it is direct feeling-contact with what matters. It is thereby a freedom from conventional values. It is also a freedom from self-serving in the shallow sense that is itself conventional. We could say that it is [...] a disinterested service of everything that lives, for its own sake and for no other reason.<sup>16</sup>

This summary encapsulates to a remarkable extent the character traits of Erwin, who is the individualist par excellence within the novel. From a depth-psychological viewpoint, the intuiting and narrative prioritisation of the feeling function at this historical moment is a significant achievement. *Ein moderner Märtyrer* was published at a time of mounting international crisis, which was conditioned by collective perceptions of struggle, of competition as norm, and of domination as ideal. Like *Der Untertan*, it exposes power-orientated perceptions. While H. Mann's novel analyses these perceptions in detail, Westkirch's narrative prioritises the exploration of an alternative discourse, based on the perception that society was then marked by transition, and therefore characterised both by increased indeterminacy and intensified potential.

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<sup>16</sup> Julian David. *Interweaving Symbols of Individuation*. Cape Town: Kaggen Press, 1991, pp. 91-2.

Individuality and Individualism as Counterpoints: Ein moderner Märtyrer and the Historical Debate

The critical engagement of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* with the “archpatriarchal” Friedrich Nietzsche<sup>17</sup> begins to become apparent in the presentation of an unheroic, duty-bound protagonist, whose orientation is the “‘good, the true and beautiful’, and of ‘equal rights for all’”, deemed “ridiculous” by this philosopher.<sup>18</sup> Yet while neo-Darwinistic notions of human nature<sup>19</sup> are refuted in Erwin’s character, Nietzsche’s concept of *individuality* is espoused, as has already been highlighted; it can even be described as the essential function of Erwin’s character. Narratorial engagement with Nietzsche therefore is manifestly selective and also references wider contemporaneous debates. In Nietzsche’s analysis, the problematics of collective morality versus the phenomenon of individuality appear as a universal issue, which recurs in human societies through millennia, irrespective of social context; it is described in the motto that prefaces the novel as an “uralte Tragödie”. His overarching judgements, however, do not bear witness to their author’s acontextuality. In order to establish the quality of engagement with this philosopher in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, a brief exploration of the development of contemporaneous debates about individuality will be useful.

Louis Blanc (1811-1882), writing in 1846, saw individualism as a “major cultural principle, encompassing Protestantism, the Bourgeoisie, and the Enlightenment.”<sup>20</sup> At

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<sup>17</sup> The term is coined by Geoff Waite in respect of the erotic and terminological specificity of Nietzsche’s reception of Wagner’s music: “the music of Wagner [...] possessed for Nietzsche the quasi-sexual, and certainly phallocentric, power not merely to disseminate but also to re/produce the (semiotic and illocutionary, if not also physiological) tools of dissemination. In short, style is penis or phallus – literally as well as figuratively [...] what is ultimately at stake for Nietzsche in Wagner, in Beaudelaire and in his own work is an ‘aristocratic-radical’ (not to say also archpatriarchal and phallic) mode of production.” (Geoff Waite. “Nietzsche’s Beaudelaire, or the Sublime Proleptic Spin of his Politico-Economic Thought”, in: *Representations*, No. 50 (Spring, 1995), pp. 22-3.)

<sup>18</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, quoted in Hinton Thomas. *Nietzsche in German politics and society, 1890-1918*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988, p. 48.

<sup>19</sup> Use of the term neo-Darwinist in respect of Nietzsche derives from the title of John Richardson’s recent study, which compares Nietzsche’s theories both to Darwin’s original hypotheses and to subsequent Social Darwinists such as Herbert Spencer. Due to Nietzsche’s various appropriations, misunderstandings and extensions of Darwin’s hypotheses, Richardson terms him both a “new” and a “quasi” Darwinist. (Cf. for instance, John Richardson. *Nietzsche’s New Darwinism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 43, 59, 65, 68, 148, 170.)

<sup>20</sup> Louis Blanc, quoted in: Steven Lukes. “The Meanings of ‘Individualism’”, in: *Journal of the History of Ideas*. Vol 32, No. 1 (Jan. – Mar., 1971), pp. 50-1. – In respect of Enlightenment thinkers, Blanc implicitly



the same time, this cultural principle, while “historically necessary”, brought a “false and incomplete freedom”:

The principle of individualism is that which, taking man out of society, makes him sole judge of what surrounds him and of himself, gives him a heightened sense of his rights without showing him his duties, abandons him to his own powers, and, for the whole of government, proclaims *laissez-faire*. Individualism, inaugurated by Luther [1483-1586], has developed with an irresistible force, and, dissociated from the religious factor... it governs the present; it is the spiritual principle of things.<sup>21</sup>

Blanc's view implies that Luther's emphasis on the importance of self ultimately involved an autonomously functioning psychological process: individualism, at its 'inauguration', was attended by, but not contingent on, religious practice – it continued to operate when secularisation occurred, such as during the Enlightenment.<sup>22</sup> The topic of individualism as counterpoint to individuality was regarded as pressing in European industrialising societies by the early nineteenth century: it was taken up, for instance, by the Danish existentialist philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855):<sup>23</sup>

'The public is all and nothing, the most dangerous of all powers, and the most meaningless. One may speak to a whole nation in the name of the public and yet the public is less than one ever so insignificant, actual human being.' The public is an anonymous 'they' that functions as the final arbiter of fashion, in clothing, in politics, art and literature. Kierkegaard anticipates a number of twentieth century

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pinpoints that they “stressed that their goals were not restricted to the domain of ideas. They sought to change the general mode of thinking, to bring about an alteration in the way in which people understood their place in the universe and how they thought about politics, about society, and about religion,” as captured succinctly by Immanuel Kant's famous dictum “dare to know”, translated as “have the courage to use your own understanding.” (James Schmidt. James Schmidt. “Introduction”, in: *The Enlightenment. Reason, Tolerance, and Humanity*. Modern Scholar Recorded Books, LLC. 2007.)

<sup>21</sup> Louis Blanc, quoted in Richard Koebner, “Zur Begriffsbildung der Kulturgeschichte. II. Zur Geschichte des Begriffs ‘Individualismus’ (Jacob Burckhardt, Wilhelm von Humboldt und die französische Soziologie)”, in: *Historische Zeitschrift*, CXLIX (1934), p. 269.

<sup>22</sup> James Schmidt locates secularisation as an after-effect of Sir Isaac Newton's discovery of mechanisms: “It is difficult to overstate the impact of Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) on his age: Voltaire hailed him as ‘the greatest man who ever lived.’ His success in demonstrating that the movement of all bodies, whether on earth or in the heavens, could be reduced to a few simple formulas served as a model that scholars working in other fields would strive to emulate. But these laws also had, for Newton and many of his contemporaries, important theological implications. The elegant clockwork of the universe implied the existence of a divine artificer who designed the mechanism, set it into motion, and – for some, including Newton himself – still guided the movements of the planets. Those who hailed him tended to draw radically different implications from his work – which, in fact, few of them actually read. His image of a complex and harmoniously ordered universe provided some readers with an allegory for the hierarchically structured society of pre-revolutionary Europe. Others, however, drew more radical implications from his work, and, flirting with materialism, questioned whether there was any need for a God at all.” (Schmidt, “Lecture 3: Scientific Inquiry, Religious Controversy, and Political Dissent”, in: *The Enlightenment*.) – Adam Smith (1723-1790) and Bernard Mandeville's (1670-1733) atomistic ideas about society assume mechanism as cause; they may therefore be counted as among those who were “flirting with materialism” and who questioned “whether there was any need for a God at all.”

<sup>23</sup> Kierkegaard (1813-1855) is regarded as the father of existentialism, and therefore as Nietzsche's predecessor. Jaspers sees them as equals in terms of societal analysis: “da beide eine Hellsicht für die Zeit haben – sie sehen mit einer sie bezwingenden Gewißheit, deutlich bis in die einzelnsten Züge des gegenwärtigen Daseins, was vor sich geht [...]” Karl Jaspers. *Vernunft und Existenz*. Munich: Piper, 1960, p. 25.

philosophers, notably Martin Heidegger and José Ortega y Gasset, when he associates the public's rise with the development of mass communications. Newspapers, in his day the primary tool of mass communication, attempt to maximise circulation by publishing anonymous articles tailored to the lowest common denominator of taste. Kierkegaard says the press has lifted mediocrity up to authority and they've loosed on society the demon of levelling. They systematically suppress any difference and distinction, any rise above the ordinary and customary [...].<sup>24</sup>

Collective consciousness, termed the public, according to Kierkegaard becomes perilous when aided by modern technological advance. His view resonates with debates in France and Switzerland that were making a distinction between *individualism* and *individuality*. Steven Lukes observes:

Many, from Balzac [1799-1850] onwards, stressed the opposition between "individualisme", implying anarchy and social atomization, and "individualité," implying personal independence and self-realization. For the Swiss theologian Alexandre Vinet [1797-1847], these were 'two sworn enemies; the first an obstacle and negation of any society; the latter a principle to which society owes all its savor, life and reality.' The 'progress of individualism' meant 'the relaxation of social unity because of the increasingly pronounced predominance of egoism,' while the 'gradual extinction of individuality' meant 'the increasingly strong inclination for minds... to surrender themselves to what is known as public opinion or the spirit of the age.'<sup>25</sup>

Individualism, as "egoism", is here taken as the root cause of the "levelling" which Kierkegaard refers to and is a process which Vinet observes to be "increasing".

The difference between individuality and egoism continued to be felt as a vital concern around the turn of the twentieth century, by which time conceptualisations had further diversified. According to Max Weber in 1904, for instance, "the term 'individualism' embraces the utmost heterogeneity of meanings [...]. A thorough, historically-orientated conceptual analysis would at the present time be of the highest value to scholarship."<sup>26</sup> *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, by centralising the meaning of individuality, necessarily takes up its counterpoint and therefore engages with this debate.

Individualism is exemplified particularly in the egoism of Oswald Hadeln and Pastor

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<sup>24</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, quoted in: George Connell. *Søren Kierkegaard: The Giants of Philosophy*. Carmichael & Carmichael Inc., 1991. (Cf. also, Karl Jaspers. "Erste Vorlesung. Herkunft der gegenwärtigen philosophischen Situation. (Die geschichtliche Bedeutung Kierkegaards und Nietzsches)", in: *Vernunft und Existenz*. Munich: Piper, 1960, pp. 7 – 35.)

<sup>25</sup> Steven Lukes. "The Meanings of 'Individualism'", in: *Journal of the History of Ideas*. Vol 32, No. 1 (Jan. – Mar., 1971), p. 49.

<sup>26</sup> Max Weber. (T. Parsons transl.) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1930, p. 222.

Mahrenholz and therefore encompasses the *Bildungs-* as well as the *Wirtschaftsbürgertum*. The narrative treatment of Hadeln has been previously highlighted. The pastor, who represents the “‘geistige Aristokratie’ [...] – [der] Professoren, Gymnasiallehrer, Pfarrer”,<sup>27</sup> is initially introduced when he interrupts Erwin’s reverie in the graveyard during the latter’s reflections on the implications of his inheritance:

Schlurfende Schritte weckten den Träumenden [Erwin]. Den Mittelweg zwischen den Gräbern herauf wandelte mit Würde eine vornübergebeugte Gestalt in dunklem Winterüberzieher und abgeschabtem Cylinderhut. Der Nahende hatte ein feistes, lächelndes Gesicht mit seltsam zurücktretendem Kinn und vorstehenden, neugierig untersuchenden Augen, der Mund zog sich über den zahnlosen Kiefern zusammen, als sauge er beständig an einem Stückchen Zucker. (EMM, p. 8)

The notion of dreaming is here differentiated – Erwin’s dream refers to a socially critical stance that is the result of an ethically astute consciousness. Thus he is dreaming only in so far as this signifies temporary inattention to his physical surroundings.

Mahrenholz’s steps, by contrast, “schlurfen” – his gait implies the lack of dynamism characteristic of tiredness, or inner stasis born of mental and physical routine. In terms of consciousness, his manner of moving suggests a state allied with sleep. Further, his facial features suggest self-satisfaction, which belies intellectual impotence – his smile is “feist”, his chin recedes and he has no teeth, or metaphorically, neither stature nor impact. Instead, he conveys the impression of sucking on a piece of sugar. The juxtaposition of curious, interrogative eyes with a receding chin, further, connotes not analytical, but rather, an intrusive and shallow kind of curiosity, to amplify the impression of ineffectuality. This subtly satirical introduction is amplified by the contrast of the narrative vision for education, which must serve the “höhere Entwicklung des einzelnen” for the purpose of “freier Bethätigung seiner ihm angeborenen Fähigkeiten” (EMM, p. 4) – in other words, it must be vital rather than formulaic, and egalitarian. The novel here comments on the anti-individualistic trend in education, noted by Theodor Fontane in 1896: “die rasch wachsende Verlederung der Menschen datiert von den Examinas, und wir sind deshalb das langweiligste Volk, weil wir das Examenvolk

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<sup>27</sup> Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht*, p. 287.

sind.”<sup>28</sup> Pastor Mahrenholz overall is shown to be invested in maintaining the status quo for the sake of his comfortable life and acceptance in polite society, by whom he is regularly entertained (cf. EMM, p. 86, 373). The lack of compassion in this conservatism is revealed at the first narrative crisis. When the workers are subdued and hundreds of families turned out of doors without notice,

pries er mit breitem Lächeln des Herrn Gnade, die alles so herrlich hinausgeführt habe, die Erwin Genesung schenkte von schwerer Krankheit und die aufrührerischen Buben zügelte und unterwarf ihrem Herrn in Zucht und Ordnung. Er begriff es nicht, wie sein lieber, junger Freund gegenüber solch’ offenbaren und großen Segnungen mit solcher Beharrlichkeit einem unfruchtbaren Trübsinn nachhängen könne. (EMM, p. 280)

The pastor’s religiously-based approval of the workers’ “Unterwerfung” reveals implacability of resolve when it comes to maintaining an authoritarian social system. In particular, the separation of the traditional *Bürgertum* by the Wilhelmine period from “the classes and strata below it, the less educated and less propertied strata, the *Mittelstand*, the workers and the people in general” on account of its “increasingly exclusive and defensive [...] less and less liberal” positioning is visible here.<sup>29</sup> By depicting Mahrenholz as educated yet ethically complacent, the *Bildungsbürger*, like the *Wirtschaftsbürger* is connoted to be deficient: the disidentification of education and ethical awareness on the one hand challenges the status of a traditional neohumanistic education and on the other, conceptualises individuality as a quality of consciousness, rather than as the product of a refined intellect.

Individualism, as egoism, is through the exemplary *Wirtschafts-* and *Bildungsbürger* attributed to the existing social structure and specifically, to the power relations that underpin it. Interestingly, causality is not sought in the rise of consumerism, as, for instance, occurs in Charlotte Niese’s *Licht und Schatten* in respect of the *Wirtschaftsbürger* and proletariat. A part of the reason may be that the rural setting of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* made this phenomenon less applicable. A further reason is the

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<sup>28</sup> Theodor Fontane to Georg Friedlaender, 22/03/1896, quoted in: Kurt Schreinert (ed.). *Theodor Fontane. Briefe an Georg Friedländer*. Heidelberg: Quelle & Meier, 1954, p. 295.

<sup>29</sup> Jürgen Kocka/Allen Mitchell (ed.) *Bourgeois Society in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Oxford/Providence: Berg, 1993, p. 19.

psychologically orientated focus. A propensity for greed is highlighted briefly in Relling senior, who has “die Augen starr auf das in seinen Händen reißend zusammenströmende Gold gerichtet” (EMM, p. 5). Critique of a “Herr im Hause” attitude towards employees, however, is foregrounded. Egoism is readily attributable to the bourgeoisie because for this stratum, affluence and common consensus work as reciprocal factors. Oskar Hadeln is used to emphasise this combination in his counsel to Erwin about how he should manage the business after the failure of his reforms:

Lieber Junge, das ist ganz einfach: Du machst es genau wie alle andern, hörst auf vernünftigen Rat, behandelst die Leute vom Werk nicht wie verkappte Halbgötter, sondern wie das, was sie sind: brave Arbeitstiere, Ergänzungen deiner Maschinen, Motoren mit ein bißchen Hirn sozusagen. Dabei wirst du dich und werden sie sich ganz vorzüglich stehen. Glaub du meiner Erfahrung: für jede Schwärmerei, um die deine Phantasie ärmer wird, wird dein Beutel reicher. (EMM, p. 243)

Personal advantage is here claimed as norm, to deny cognition of injustice. The psychological consequences of this collective *modus operandi* are summarised by Hadeln’s sister Florence:

Wie alle allen gleichen! Ähnlich wie Handschuhe, alle rechten überein, – überein alle linken. Ein wenig Putz für uns Frauen; für die Männer ein paar dicke Geschäftsbücher, – und das Glück ist gebacken. (EMM, p. 32)

Material wealth, comfort and elegance are deconstructed to denote the *appearance*, rather than actuality of individuality. The question arises whether individualism is also attributable where individuality is systematically, rather than hegemonically and covertly, suppressed, as is the case with the proletariat in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*. The characteristic that is particularly striking in respect of the workers’ “Kettenhund” mentality (EMM, p. 195) is inadequacy of inner resource, partly due to lack of self-discipline, and partly to the absence of a sense of intrinsic, rather than utilitarian value. It is notable that a secularisation process is referred to throughout *Ein moderner Märtyrer* in the context of the Protestant society which it depicts. Schmied Wehland, for instance, comments that it is not he, but his wife who is distraught at the prospect of leaving their home after he had been given notice by Relling senior:

Ich weiß wohl: wenn der Mensch tot ist, dann ist's aus. Aber dem Weibervolk machen die Pfaffen so viel weis. Meine läßt sich's nicht ausreden, daß die drei Köpfchen aus irgend einem Ausschnitt im blauen Himmel gerade auf ihre eigenen Gräber heruntergucken, wenn sie ihnen Kränze darauflegt. (EMM, p. 26)

Marxist-inspired atheism is likewise alluded to:

“Unser Karl geht gar nicht mehr hin,” erklärte die Zieseniß. “Der Herr Pastor fragt die jungen Leute den Katechismus ab. Weißte, sagt Karl, wenn ich Bibel hören will, dann kann ich ja man Sonntags in die Kirche gehen. [...] Durch das Gerede von himmlischer Glückseligkeit soll unsereinem bloß das Maul gestopft werden über den irdischen Jammer. (EMM, p. 155)

Both the smith's positivistically-connoted atheism and the young worker's socialist-inspired materialism can be seen as examples of egoism coming to stand for the “spiritual principle of things”. Aside from these implicit wider cultural contexts, secularisation in the proletariat is associated with the spiritual void that arises from Pastor Mahrenholz's insincere religiosity. In consequence, his interventions are generally ignored; his single successful measure, sermons during the young labourers' vocational training sessions, are decried. His ineffectuality, however, becomes critical when the workers are on the verge of revolt:

Pfarrer Mahrenholz kam in Eile und Entsetzen, die Perrücke schief unter dem hohen Cylinderhut, und erbot sich, seinen Pfarrkindern ins Gewissen zu reden. Doch niemand hörte auf ihn. (EMM, p. 202)

Incongruous apparel, little reminiscent of the traditional simplicity of a Protestant minister, works alongside his consternation to amplify the impression of lack of substance. He is ‘not quite real’ and somewhat incongruous in the overly stylised combination of wig and top hat. The import of his inadequacy is here revealed: while generally appearing as of little consequence, at a point of crisis it amounts to a void without recourse. Thus a spiritual void is here shown to throw the workers back on their own resources.

The exemplary social democrat Jakob Schmalz's concept of an improved society is, unsurprisingly, presented as individualism: it is marked by demands but not by responsibility, and without sight of the whole system. Notably, he applies social

democracy tracts acontextually, as dogma (cf. EMM, pp. 182-3). Further, the workers' simple self-referentiality also reveals their inability to function as individuals and their consequently hapless recourse to mutual influence:

Vielleicht war's hier der jähe Wechsel, das unvermittelte Hinaustaumeln aus tatsächlichen, wenn auch nicht so benannten Sklaventum in die Freiheit unabhängiger Personen, das diese Männer im Innersten verstörte, unsicher, phantastisch machte. Die schändlichsten, verderblichsten und unsinnigsten Absichten wurden dem neuen Herrn untergeschoben und geglaubt. Es genügte, daß einer ein drohendes Unheil nannte: Entlassung, Lohnverkürzung, sechzehnständige Zwangsarbeit, Polizeiaufsicht, – und brüllend ward es von allen als bevorstehend, als gewiß, als in des Neuen jesuitisch verborgenen Plänen liegend, proklamiert. (EMM, pp. 186-7)

But it is the final outcome, when seen from the point of view of the psychology of the concurrent collective consciousness, which has the most dramatic effect:

In der Frühstückspause brach der Trotz, der Widerspruch hervor. Zu tief schon war die Macht des Chefs untergraben, oder vielmehr, sie war aus seiner Hand in andre Hände übergegangen. Denn der Instinkt der Herde verlangt nach dem Herrn. Zum Gehorchen geboren, pfeift sie auf Selbstbestimmung und läuft dem nach, der am lautesten und rücksichtslosigsten befiehlt. Und das waren in Arnsfelde der rote Jakob und Schmied Wehland. (EMM, p. 199)

The term "Herde" here clearly echoes Nietzsche's critique of morality.<sup>30</sup> But the situation is problematised further, since contradictory psychological factors combine in this episode: having long been ruled "absolutistisch" and "von oben", the workers' urge for self-determination manifests through "Persönlichkeitsstrukturen, bei denen [das] Vermögen der Selbstzügelung auf einen Fremdzwang angewiesen bleibt".<sup>31</sup> Since in such a psychological context, the demand for instant autonomy is self-defeating, the workers succumb to demagoguery and violent rebellion. Insofar as individualism is a mindset in which motivations and behaviours are determined by the consensus of the majority, therefore, it also applies to the proletariat, where poverty constricts personal scope almost entirely. It may be said that the "Herr im Hause Standpunkt" ensues to mutually degrading effect within this novel.

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<sup>30</sup> Nietzsche explicitly refers to "Moralität" as "Heerden-Instinct". (Cf. for instance, Friedrich Nietzsche. *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*. Drittes Buch, 116. First publication: Chemnitz: Ernst Schmeitzner, 1882. Online version: Project Gutenberg-DE. <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3245/1>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013. – The print version appeared in 1882.

<sup>31</sup> Norbert Elias. *Studien über die Deutschen*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1990, pp. 49-50.

As already discussed, in answer to psychological constellations of individualism, the novel posits a model of *individuality* in Erwin. Rather than presenting a simple binary opposition between individualism and a specific vision of individuality, however, a more complex discourse is constructed through the novel's implicit dialogue with Nietzsche's concept of the superman. Two further characters who are 'not of the herd' are presented – Florence, on the one hand, presents a female version of individuality, which will be dealt with separately. On the other hand, *Angestellter* Anton Fahrke, an imposing alpha male character, serves to interrogate attributes of evolutionary fitness resonant with Nietzsche's neo-Darwinistic concept of the same.<sup>32</sup> Fahrke is initially introduced in terms of physique and demeanour:

Da wurde die Thür heftig aufgerissen, und ohne Anfrage stürmte ein breitbrüstiger Mann ins Zimmer, das klein und niedrig zu werden schien bei seinem Eintritt. Sein Gesicht war von Sonne und Wind gebräunt. Schlichtes dunkles Haar von ungewöhnlicher Fülle fiel auf eine festknochige, glatte Stirn. Schmale braune Augen blickten lebhaft unter sehr geraden Brauen hervor, die Nase war groß und gerade, das Kinn massig hervorgearbeitet, die Lippen ungewöhnlich rot. Seine Stimme dröhnte laut, und er nahm sich nicht die Mühe, sie zu dämpfen. (EMM, p. 42)

This portrayal of robust male physicality is belied by unusually red lips, an image that calls to mind a predator. Emphasis on features that are “fest”, “gerade” and “massig” from the outset indicates an unbending will and inflexible, overpowering nature, characteristics that are supplemented by his forceful, if uncouth, behaviour. He is, further, a “Kraftmensch” (EMM, p. 64) and “Plebeier” (EMM, p. 241) with “heißhungrige[m] Ehrgeiz” (EMM, p. 147) and “ein Bild blühender Gesundheit und brutaler Kraft neben dem zarten Hausherrn” (EMM, p. 214), to effect an ambivalent portrayal of a plebeian on the one hand, and of one of nature's alpha males on the

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<sup>32</sup> For references to Nietzsche's concept of the “Übermensch” and its evolutionary import, cf. Friedrich Nietzsche. *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Munich: Goldmann, [1883], pp. 7, 9, 39, 48, 52, 56, 61, 62, 65, 72, 79, 103, 117, 159, 169, 177, 229, 230.)



other. Fahrke's physiognomy is matched by his character traits. His resentment of Erwin's non-authoritarian stance is presented through an internalised perspective:

Warum die Macht, die herrliche, kostbare, die göttliche Macht diesem Philosophen in den Schoß werfen, dem die Seligkeit des Befehlens fremd war, der den Rausch der Herrschaft nicht kannte, freiwillig ihre Zügel von sich werfen konnte! – Er hätte an seiner Stelle stehen sollen! (EMM, p. 116)

In a direct cross-reference to Nietzsche's postulate, his will to power is here, as elsewhere, described as his main motivation. Attribution of "Rausch" further echoes Nietzsche's notion of a Dionysian life-value. It denotes irrationality, amorality and reality in contradistinction to the "Lust und Weisheit des Scheines" attributed to Apollo: the Dionysian "[wird] uns am nächsten noch durch die Analogie des Rausches gebracht."<sup>33</sup> Referring to *Also sprach Zarathustra* in his memoir, Nietzsche sees the superman as "dionysisch", in terms of "Überfluss von Kraft", "ungeheuren Leidenschaft" and "weltregierende[m] Geist" who 'creates reality' according to his own will.<sup>34</sup>

In one of the novel's consistent appropriations of French naturalism,<sup>35</sup> temperament is emphasised along with environmental factors. Fahrke's temperament, like that of other protagonists, is presented as having its origins in heredity:

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<sup>33</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche. *Die Geburt der Tragödie*. First publication: Leipzig: Fritzsche, 1872. Online version: Project Gutenberg-DE. <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3261/1>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.

<sup>34</sup> "Also sprach Zarathustra. Ein Buch für alle und keinen", in: Friedrich Nietzsche. *Ecce Homo*. First publication: Wiesbaden: Reichert [1888]. Online version: <[http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?pageno=34&fk\\_files=1466164](http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?pageno=34&fk_files=1466164)>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.

<sup>35</sup> Naomi Schor quotes Zola's interest in "solving the twin problems of temperament and environment" in his "Les Rougon-Marquart" novel cycle. (Emile Zola, quoted in: Naomi Schor. *Zola's Crowds*. Baltimore/London: John Hopkins University Press, 1978, pp. 136-140, here p. 137.) Lilian Furst and Peter Skrine likewise note that "Zola's conception of the Rougon-Macquart series as the 'natural and social history of a family' is patently inspired by the doctrine of heredity." On the other hand, they observe of German Naturalism that, while it was not homogeneous, theoreticians such as Arnold Holz criticised the notion of "temperament" on the grounds that it "left the door wide open for subjectivity", while at the same time, antecedents such as the "politically activist *Jungdeutschland*" contributed as inspiration for Naturalist writers. (Cf. Lilian Furst/Peter Skrine. *Naturalism*. London: Methuen, 1971, pp. 38-9). It is certainly noteworthy that H. Mann's *Der Untertan*, which its author sees as "ausdrücklich an die französische Tradition eines Balzac und Zola anknüpfend", (Mann, quoted in Essen, "Heinrich Mann, Der Untertan (1916)", p. 4), emphatically prioritises environmental factors over temperament, and demonstrates social activism over "positivist observation" (cf. Furst/Skrine, *Naturalism*, p. 21) in its use of satire in contravention of his self-perception. In *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, however, temperament appears more largely. Heredity plays a strong role both in Fahrke and in Erwin, since their temperaments respectively prove resistant to formative environmental factors. No hard-and-fast rule is applied, however – rather, the balance is a shifting one: in other bourgeois as well as proletarian characters, temperament and environment effect is depicted as inextricably linked.

Er ward als kleiner Junge schon zum Gänsehüter der Ortschaft erkoren. Aber in seiner Ungeduld und seinem jungen Herrscherübermut zerbrach er seinen Unterthanen mit dem Stecken die Flügel [...] (EMM, p. 147)

In this hereditary context, Fahrke is an elaboration on Nietzsche's amoral-ideal proposition:

Mit seiner gigantischen Willenskraft, mit seinem herkulischen Körperbau, dem gesunden Bauernverstand und den bedeutenden Fachkenntnissen, die er selbst um so höher anschlug, je mühsamer er sich zu ihnen hatte durchringen müssen, fühlte er sich seinem Herrn überlegen, seinen Genossen überlegen, den Weibern allen, allen, mit denen sein Schicksal ihn in Berührung gebracht hatte. Er war einer der wenigen, die konnten; ein Mensch ohne Ermüdung, ohne Willenszersplitterung. (EMM, p. 146)

Fahrke's attributes and sentiments can be compared with assertions in *Also sprach Zarathustra*:

Das ist dein Unverzeihlichstes: du hast die Macht, und du willst nicht herrschen.<sup>36</sup>

Dass Kampf und Ungleiches auch noch in der Schönheit sei und Krieg um Macht und Übermacht: das lehrt er [der Weiseste] uns hier im deutlichsten Gleichniss [...] göttlich wollen wir wider einander streben!<sup>37</sup>

Das ist euer ganzer Wille, ihr Weisesten, als ein Wille zur Macht; und auch wenn ihr vom Guten und Bösen redet und von den Werthschätzungen.<sup>38</sup>

Wo ich Lebendiges fand, da fand ich Willen zur Macht; und noch im Willen des Dienenden fand ich den Willen, Herr zu sein. Dass dem Stärkeren diene das Schwächere, dazu überredet es sein Wille.<sup>39</sup>

The historicity of the superman concept is worth noting. The earlier quoted observations by Louis Blanc pinpoint both the longevity and cultural specificity of debates concerning the relationship between Protestantism and secularisation within society, which predates positivistic thinking related to Darwin's seminal evolutionary hypothesis in the mid and late nineteenth century. Thomas Mann observed in 1918:

Die seelischen Voraussetzungen und Ursprünge [...] der ethischen Tragödie [von Nietzsches] Lebens, dieses unsterblichen europäischen Schauspiels von Selbstüberwindung, Selbstzüchtigung, Selbstkreuzigung mit dem geistigen Opfertode als herz- und hirnerreißendem Abschluß, – wo anders sind sie zu

<sup>36</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche. "Die stillste Stunde", in: *Also sprach Zarathustra. Ein Buch für alle und keinen*. Munich: Goldmann, [1883].)

Online version based on Friedrich Nietzsche. *Also sprach Zarathustra. Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen*. Leipzig: C.G. Naumann, 1901. Project Gutenberg-DE. <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3248/55>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013>. – The print version appeared in 1883.

<sup>37</sup> Nietzsche, "Von den Taranteln", <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3248/40>>.

<sup>38</sup> Nietzsche, "Von der Selbstüberwindung", <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3248/45>>.

<sup>39</sup> Nietzsche, "Von der Selbstüberwindung", <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3248/45>>.

finden, als in dem Protestantismus des Naumburger Pastorsohnes, als in jener nordisch-deutschen, bürgerlich-dürisch-moralistischen Sphäre, in welcher das Griffelwerk 'Ritter, Tod und Teufel' steht, und die immer die Heimatspäre dieser strengen, durchaus nicht 'südlichen' Seele geblieben ist? [...] Er schleuderte seine späten, schweflichten Blitze gegen das 'asketische Ideal', aber er selbst war der unbedingteste und fanatischste Asket der Geistesgeschichte.<sup>40</sup>

In a similar vein, Steven Aschheim highlights Carl Jung's analysis of Nietzsche's philosophy, which adds a comparison of Protestantism and Catholicism to Mann's "psychologische Reihe 'Kalvinismus, Bürgerlichkeit, Heldentum'".<sup>41</sup>

The Protestant connection and its secularizing consequences were clearly relevant. The notion that the Nietzschean frame and its overall problematic was essentially a post-Protestant affair, a function of collective crisis and rupture, was widespread amongst those centrally involved in Nietzschean discourse. Jung [...] argued in 1936 that Nietzsche could not touch 'people who are singing the community song, because they don't need to bother with it – they remain a remnant of the Catholic church. They did not develop as Protestants, but remained historical derelicts of the original Christian church. But if they develop further as Protestants they will necessarily come to the tremendous problem to which Nietzsche came, namely, to the idea of the Superman, to the idea of the thing in man that takes the place of the God that has been hitherto valid.' Nietzsche's whole point of view, Jung insisted, was a direct outgrowth of the Protestant conception of radical responsibility, the extravagant belief in one's ability and in the moral task of higher self-creation.<sup>42</sup>

Jung, encompassing unconscious as well as conscious processes, further highlights the patriarchal nature of Protestantism in his essay, which, exalting 'spirit' and relegating 'nature', makes personal as well as corporeal gratification unacceptable and hence, desire for "anything agreeable" bad. On the other hand, desiring, in a morally strictured sense "for something disagreeable" becomes permissible. He sees Nietzsche's espousal of the idea of the superman in terms of an underlying *unconscious* preoccupation – it is acceptable because it is a non-gratifying proposition – while at the same time, it is a "most Protestant notion that you should be the one whom you wish to be."<sup>43</sup> Thomas Mann's analysis in 1948 of Nietzsche's "heroische Glücksverachtung"<sup>44</sup> exemplifies this import:

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<sup>40</sup> Thomas Mann. *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*. Stockholmer Gesamtausgabe der Werke von Thomas Mann. Frankfurt: Fischer, 1956, pp. 138-9.

<sup>41</sup> Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*, pp. 137-8.

<sup>42</sup> Jung, quoted in: Steven E. Aschheim. *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890–1990*. Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford: University of California Press, 1992, p. 22.

<sup>43</sup> C.G. Jung. "Comments on a Passage from Nietzsche's Zarathustra", in: *Spring. An Annual of Archetypal Psychology and Jungian Thought*. New York: Spring Publication, 1972, p. 159.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas Mann. *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*. Berlin: Suhrkamp, 1947, p. 40. – The publication history are given by the publisher: "Diesen Vortrag hielt Thomas Mann zuerst im Mai 1947

Was definiert den Heiligen? Daß er nichts von allem tut, was er möchte, und alles was er nicht möchte. So hat Nietzsche gelebt: 'Allem entsagend, was ich verehrte, der Verehrung selbst entsagend.... Du sollst Herr über dich werden, Herr auch über die eigenen Tugenden.' [...] Sein Wahrheitsbegriff ist asketisch: denn Wahrheit ist ihm, was wehe tut, und er würde jeder Wahrheit mißtrauen, die ihm wohlthäte.<sup>45</sup>

Thus when Nietzsche "verkündete: 'Gott ist tot'", it was "ein Beschluß, der für ihn das schwerste aller Opfer bedeutete".<sup>46</sup> Jung, further, locates Euhemerism as a concept that arose in the "second part of the nineteenth century", which by the "later part of the century" was discarded in favour of the assumption that "God or Gods were not even euhemeristic persons [but] a conception [that] dated from nowhere, that it was a mere invention which always had been made, a sort of hypothesis entirely man-made."<sup>47</sup>

According to the depth-psychological viewpoint, the conscious stance, be it existentialist- or positivist-atheistic, does not affect the continued existence of unconscious assumptions that bear on moral direction and particularity, even when they are decried. Instead, "it is a universal fact that everywhere we encounter certain ideas which are equivalents of this basic experience of man, namely, that outside or beside his own will, there is still another will, whatever that is."<sup>48</sup> Similarly, when it comes to Nietzsche's critique of a "lebendigen Gemeinsinn", which causes the "Unterordnung des Individuums", and which has the metaphorical attributes of a "Sumpf", his own tracts are not made immune to the underlying legacies of the "Gemeinsinn" by virtue of a vehement *conscious* assertion to this effect. More accurately, perhaps, Nietzsche himself "participated in the attitude of his time."<sup>49</sup> The

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in gekürzter englischer Form im Hunter College, New York, und deutsch im Juni 1947 gelegentlich der Tagung des PEN-Clubs in Zürich. Die erste deutsche Veröffentlichung erfolgte in 1947 im Herbstheft der *Neuen Rundschau*, Bermann-Fischer Verlag, Stockholm."

<sup>45</sup> Nietzsche, quoted in: Mann, *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*, p. 28.

<sup>46</sup> Mann, *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*, p. 51.

<sup>47</sup> Jung, "Comments on a Passage from Nietzsche's Zarathustra", p. 149.

<sup>48</sup> Jung, "Comments on a Passage from Nietzsche's Zarathustra", p. 153.

<sup>49</sup> C.G. Jung. "Comments on a Passage from Nietzsche's Zarathustra", p. 151. – Thomas Mann's ironically formulated critique provides another perspective on Nietzsche's contextuality with his time: "Etwas in die Enge getrieben sieht unsere Verehrung sich freilich, wenn der von Nietzsche hundertmal verhöhnte und als giftiger Hassler höheren Lebens angeprangerte 'Sozialismus der unterworfenen Kaste' uns nachweist, daß sein Übermensch nichts anderes ist als die Idealisierung des fascistischen Führers, und daß er selbst mit seinem ganzen Philosophieren ein Schrittmacher, Mitschöpfer und Ideensouffleur des europäischen - , des Welt-Fascismus gewesen ist. Unter der Hand bin ich geneigt, hier Ursache und Wirkung umzukehren und nicht zu glauben, daß Nietzsche den Fascismus gemacht hat, sonder der Fascismus ihn, - ich will sagen: politikfern im Grunde und unschuldig-geistig, hat er als sinsibelstes Ausdrucks- und Registrierinstrument mit seinem Macht-Philosophem den heraufsteigenden Imperialismus vorempfunden

way in which *Ein moderner Märtyrer* critiques his tenets, therefore, is of particular interest. The novel was composed both in dialogue with Nietzsche's tracts and with the "Nietzsche-cult[s]" of 1890s German society.<sup>50</sup> Its type of engagement can be further elucidated by a brief sketch of this cult.

### Ein moderner Märtyrer in Context with Nietzsche's Reception in Germany

Reactions to Nietzsche in German society overall were ambivalent, as well as tending to be heated, proportional perhaps to the destructive import of his views, and the stylistic methods he adopted to express them.<sup>51</sup> Female reactions varied as much as did those of men,<sup>52</sup> with large-scale reception not commencing until 1890,<sup>53</sup> by which time Nietzsche had already finally succumbed to psychosis. According to Steven Aschheim, between 1890 and 1918 an "encounter with Nietzsche [...]" was virtually mandatory for "the intelligentsia" and "literate middle classes" in Germany.<sup>54</sup> The 1890s "saw the emergence of what was dubbed the 'Nietzsche cult', and which, in reality, were a series of Nietzsche cults." Further, his "galvanizing effect was clearly related to the circumstances of the *Kaiserreich* and to its spiritual and political mediocrity," causing the "youth and avant-garde of the 1890s" to be Nietzsche's "first obvious followers."<sup>55</sup> Seth Taylor likewise identifies left-wing appropriations of

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und die fascistische Epoche des Abendlandes [...] als zitternde Nadel angekündigt." (Mann, *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*, p. 39.)

<sup>50</sup> Cf. for instance, Steven E. Aschheim. *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890–1990*. Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford: University of California Press, 1992, p. 19.

<sup>51</sup> For a broad overview of both admiring and hostile reactions across the societal sectors, cf. Richard Krummel. *Nietzsche und der deutsche Geist*. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1998.

<sup>52</sup> For specifically female reception, cf. for instance, "The feminist movement and Nietzsche", in: Thomas, *Nietzsche in German Politics*, pp. 80-96.

<sup>53</sup> In 1888, Nietzsche complained that Germans had not, to date, received him: "I have my readers everywhere, in Vienna, St Petersburg, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Paris, and New York – but I have none in Europe's flat-land – Germany." (Friedrich Nietzsche. (Anthony M. Ludovici transl.) *The Case of Wagner, Nietzsche Contra Wagner, and Selected Aphorisms*. Edinburgh/London: T.N. Foulis, 1911, p. 57.)

<sup>54</sup> Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890–1990*, p. 19.

<sup>55</sup> Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy*, pp. 22-3.

Nietzsche's theories in terms of a "cult".<sup>56</sup> In an article in *Die Frau* in 1898, Marie Hecht, in turn, locates "the Nietzsche cult [as] 'in full swing among women today'".<sup>57</sup> While right-wing proponents were as divided in their reception as were other sectors of society, with the possible exception of the avant-garde, the characteristic right-wing use of Nietzsche's ideas can be taken from an article in *Die Aktion*, which appeared in 1915:

The reference in [*Also sprach Zarathustra*] to 'higher development', the idea of a better type of man, the theme of 'life', the concept of the weak going under and the strong predominating [shows] the influence of Nietzsche, and Hentschell did say that over the entrance to Mittgart one could 'inscribe those words.... with which Nietzsche linked the mystery of racial breeding, which he foresaw in his mind's eye, with the name of Dionysus, 'The noblest clay, the most precious marble, is here moulded and chiselled, namely man'.<sup>58</sup>

Luise Westkirch's awareness of the preoccupation with Nietzsche shortly before the First World War can be gleaned from the publication circumstances of *Ein moderner Märtyrer*. Direct quotations of this philosopher, but not the novel's contential engagement with his theories, are removed from the republished version of the novel in 1912, which appeared under the title *Schauspieler des Lebens*.<sup>59</sup> The *nationalistic* espousal of Nietzsche was at that time a means of propagating heroic, patriotic fervour. Use of Nietzsche's concept "Übermensch" for political purposes was evident when "thousands of young Germans went off to the battlefields with copies of *Zarathustra* in their knapsacks",<sup>60</sup> a circumstance that is likely to have played a role in such a significant editing move.

*Ein moderner Märtyrer* refutes nationalism while pursuing its narrative core thematics of an egalitarian society. Nationalistic sentiment, for instance, is peripherally and

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<sup>56</sup> Seth Taylor. *Left Wing Nietzscheans: the Politics of German Expressionism, 1910-1920*. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1990, pp. 18, 23, 27

<sup>57</sup> Marie Hecht, quoted in Hinton Thomas. *Nietzsche in German politics and society, 1890-1918*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, p. 86.

<sup>58</sup> Hentschell, quoted in Thomas, *Nietzsche in German Politics*, pp. 116-7. – Willibald Hentschell, a member of the *Alldeutsche[n] Verband*, committed colonialist and Social Darwinist, formulated "Mittgart" as the representation of a German utopia. (Cf. for instance, Willibald Hentschell. *Mittgart: Ein Weg zur Erneuerung der germanischen Rasse*. Leipzig: Fritsch, 1904.)

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Luise Westkirch. *Schauspieler des Lebens*. Leipzig: Grethlein & Co., 1912.

<sup>60</sup> Theodore Ziolkowski. "Zarathustra's Reincarnations: Literary Responses to Nietzsche's Work", in: *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 107, No. 1 (January 2012), p. 212.

ambivalently acknowledged across the social strata, while militarism, which ensues from it, is disavowed. The military song “Die Wacht am Rhein” features twice, being initially sung by drunk labourers in defiance of Erwin’s decree of their pub’s earlier closing hour (cf. EMM, p. 191). Its subsequent rendition, again by labourers, occurs at the narrative’s conclusion, this time to celebrate Erwin’s dismissal of the firm’s brutal “Betriebsleiter”, Fahrke, after the latter’s take-over bid (EMM, pp. 361-4, here p. 361). Erwin responds with reservations when he first learns of his employees’ intention to honour him:

Schweremütig blickte Erwin auf die Zeilen nieder. “Wie sich die Zeiten ändern! Wie die Menschen sich ändern! Vor sieben Monaten hätten sie mich zerrissen! – Damals jubelten sie ihm zu. Jetzt schwelgt ihre Rachsucht schadenfroh [...] – Aber gleichwohl! – ich nehme die Botschaft an [...] als ein Merkzeichen, daß ich den rechten Pfad betreten habe. (EMM, p. 389)

At nightfall, their “vielstimmiger Gesang [schreckte] ihn auf” and he “bezwang sich” to watch the procession. Referring back to the narrative crisis, the workers now are a “Feuerschlange” that moves forward to kindle a “Freudenfeuer” on an “abgeernteten Acker” (EMM, p. 394), rather than to set about the destruction of buildings and machinery (EMM, pp. 220-22). The rendition of the emotive song is here therefore used to highlight the transient nature of emotion, rather than to evince patriotic sentiment. Along similar lines, enthusiasm for the army appears in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* in order to introduce the theme of aristocratic heredity (EMM, pp. 125-7, 212-3). Florence, in a state of perpetual boredom (cf. EMM, pp. 79-80), idealises the “frischen, fröhlichen Krieg” for which she would willingly sacrifice herself and her son because it means the sacrifice of life in a “Rausch von Seligkeit” (EMM, p. 126), to parody Nietzsche’s “Verherrlichungen des Krieges”.<sup>61</sup>

Ihr sagt, die gute Sache sei es, die sogar den Krieg heilige? Ich sage euch: der gute Krieg ist es, der jede Sache heiligt. [...] Was liegt am Lang-Leben! Welcher Krieger will geschont sein!<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Mann, *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*, p. 34.

<sup>62</sup> Nietzsche, “Vom Krieg und Kriegsvolke”, in: <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3248/21>>.

In contradistinction to her view, the introspective focus of the novel emphasises a pacifistic stance. At the prospect that the military should be requisitioned when the workers revolt, for instance, Erwin exclaims, “ich lasse nicht schießen! [...] Kugeln reißen Löcher, nicht bloß in die Körper” (EMM, p. 203). The allusion to psychological damage ensuing from physical violence constitutes a moment at which the psychological realism of this narrative is at its most overt – notably, it occurs as narrative pace increases towards the novel’s first climactic moment. By removing the overt signalling of the narrative critical discourse for the publication of *Schauspieler des Lebens*, Westkirch is likely to have wished to maximise the potential of reader engagement. It is significant that at the same time, she, like Charlotte Niese in respect of *Das Lagerkind*, deemed the relevance of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* to be particularly relevant to the historical moment to merit republication at that point.

When one considers a widespread *mode* of reception of Nietzsche, evident particularly among avant-garde thinkers and authors, their psychological need, and more pertinently, the need of the time becomes clearer. Among the 1890s *bohème*, or avant-garde literati, and proponents of new, strident branches of the *Frauenbewegung*,<sup>63</sup> a zealous, and even devotional mode of reception becomes apparent. It is a particularly surprising phenomenon to find among women, considering that Nietzsche’s misogyny not only is an unvarying and vociferous element of his writings, but was also already documented as such.<sup>64</sup> It is here important to qualify, however, that the devotional mode of reception *per se* was not limited to women. Male contemporaries from differing backgrounds, such as Julius Langbehn, Max Zerbst and Rudolf Steiner among others,

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<sup>63</sup> Helene Lange discusses these developments in detail in her autobiography. (Cf. for instance, Helene Lange. “Der Bund deutscher Frauenvereine mit seinen Richtungen”, in: Helene Lange. *Lebenserinnerungen*. Berlin: Herbig, 1930, pp. 219 – 226.) Thomas provides a concise exposition of the conceptual incompatibility between the *Allgemeinen[n] Deutsche[n] Frauenverein*, headed by Lange, and on the one hand the *Verband fortschrittlicher Frauenvereine* headed by Anita Augspurg and Willhelmine Cauer, and on the other, the “New Morality” movement, headed by Helene Stöcker, a fervent admirer of Nietzsche. (Cf. Thomas, *Nietzsche in German Politics*, pp. 80-5, 91-3.)

<sup>64</sup> According to a contemporaneous source, “in Wahrheit bedeutete der Nietzscheanismus innerhalb der Frauenwelt eine Abkehr von den Forderungen der ‘radikalen Gleichmacherinnen.’ Er legte sie von neuem auf ihre biologische Rolle fest und verklärte auch von neuem die Herrschaft des Mannes.” (Editorial note in *Literarische Manifeste*, quoted in: Carol Diethe. *Nietzsche’s Women: Beyond the Whip*. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1996, p. 111.)



similarly evidence hyperbolic approval in their comments. Richard Meyer finds that *Also sprach Zarathustra* is “das größte und [...] das einzige wahre Epos, das in neuerer Zeit entstand”,<sup>65</sup> while Harry Kessler evaluates Nietzsche’s effect as a

secret Messianism. The desert, to which every Messiah belongs, was in our hearts; and suddenly, like a meteor, Nietzsche appeared [...]. The way in which Nietzsche influenced, or more precisely possessed, us cannot be compared with the effect of any other contemporary thinker or poet [...] His impact was more encompassing, deeper, and more mysterious. His ever-growing echo signified the eruption of *Mystik* into a rationalized and mechanized time. [...] through him we were transported out of this ice age, reenchanting and enraptured.<sup>66</sup>

Need is here clearly iterated as a sense of alienation, and the wish for enchantment and rapture in a society devoid of those aspects that sustain the mysterious aspects of the human psyche, which are not served by a “desert” or “ice age” (mixed metaphors here stylistically echoing the repudiation of the rational demand for consistency) of inherited, fixed customs and of excessive – again Protestant-connoted – rationality as ideal. Additionally, Kessler’s rhapsody suggests that a vigorous psychological defence mechanism may have been at work against a collective “levelling”, a momentum that had already been acutely observed by Kierkegaard in respect of the rise of the public with the advent of mass communication.

That the collective occurrence of such emotionally susceptible reactions is due to specific cultural conditions is well encapsulated by Gabriele Reuter in her retrospective reflections on the success of her own novel, *Aus guter Familie*: “Mein Roman wirkte wie das Durchstechen eines Dammes, hinter dem die Fluten sich schon angebaut haben.”<sup>67</sup> She further sheds light on how psychological need was translated into zealous and progressive advocacy by the avant-garde of the day:

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<sup>65</sup> Theodore Ziolkowski. “Zarathustra’s Reincarnations: Literary Responses to Nietzsche’s Work”, in: *The Modern Language Review*. Vol. 107, No. 1 (January 2012), p. 213.

<sup>66</sup> Harry Graf Kessler. *Gesichter und Zeiten: Erinnerungen*. Berlin: Fischer, 1962, pp. 229, 243.

<sup>67</sup> Gabriele Reuter. *Vom Kinde zum Menschen*. Berlin: Fischer, 1921, p. 474. Reuter here mentions that it “erweckte einen Sturm in der Frauenwelt – die wildeste Erregung unter Vätern und Müttern. Ernste, reife Männer haben mir noch nach Jahren versichert, die Lektüre habe ihr Herzensverhältnis zu ihren Töchtern von Grund auf verändert”, while “viele Übergriffe, Abenteuer und Torheiten junger wirrer Geschöpfe sind mir auf die Rechnung gesetzt”. She considers that it could not have had this impact in the absence of predisposing factors (Reuter, *Vom Kinde zum Menschen*, p. 474). Notably, she also identifies the concurrent potential for a very different reception, such as still beset the work of women. It manifested

Individualisten von reinstem Wasser waren wir sämtlich [...] unseren [Max] Stirner hatten wir alle gelesen [...]. Nun war Friedrich Nietzsche unser Gott geworden, um den sich, wie Planeten um die Sonne, unsre Geister drehten.<sup>68</sup>

When it comes to female reception, psychological need is particularly visible in the extent that partiality can reach: educated and active women could ignore Nietzsche's patriarchal perceptuality, as his views gave them the means with which both to break with traditional bourgeois morality and to avoid a newly emergent sense of levelling mediocrity, the product of a burgeoning consumer culture. Their avowal appears, in retrospect, to be expressive of an urgency of intent which reveals a sense of suffocation that had become intolerable. It may be added, however, that while it is well documented that women were entirely barred from a sense of autonomy, and hence of individual value within a male-dominated system, it is here worth iterating the less often acknowledged point that a state governed by patriarchal perceptions does not deliver psychologically liberated selfhood for men either. Seth Taylor summarises the "Nietzsche vogue" across 1890s German society:

[The] sense of alienation from all sections of society is of decisive importance when accounting for Nietzsche's sudden popularity at the end of the nineteenth century. For it was precisely among bohemian artists, who rejected conventional society, that the Nietzsche vogue first started around 1890. Georg Brandes, the eminent Danish critic, was the first to discover Nietzsche and to lecture in Copenhagen on his 'aristocratic radicalism.' It was as a critic of morals that Brandes understood Nietzsche at the expense of other aspects of his philosophy. Nietzsche was the proclaimer of the 'new man' who frees himself from custom and tradition in order to cultivate his own individuality. Yet just these themes were already in the air."<sup>69</sup>

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when she showed the manuscript to her circle of friends prior to publication, which almost caused her subsequently to burn it: "Einen ganzen Abend hindurch war das Buch [...] der Gesprächsstoff zwischen einem großen Kreise von Männern. [...] Das Herz wurde mir schwerer und schwerer. Hier war die Mannschaft, die das Schiff der Zukunft durch Lüge und Verderbtheit ins weite Meer der Wahrheit und der Freiheit lenken sollte. Womit betrachteten sie es? Mit Zweideutigkeiten und Obszönitäten. Was war ihnen die heilige reine Begeisterung für die Wahrheit, die mich getrieben nach den Untergründen alles menschlichen Seins zu graben? Die Enthüllung von Sexualitäten" (Reuter, *Vom Kinde zum Menschen*, p. 470). (Cf. also Gabriele Reuter. *Aus guter Familie*. Berlin: Fischer, [1895].)

<sup>68</sup> Reuter, *Vom Kinde zum Menschen*, p. 448.

<sup>69</sup> Taylor, *Left Wing Nietzscheans*, p. 23. – Thomas Mann additionally comments on "die Nachbarschaft von Ästhetizismus und Barbarei. Diese unheimliche Nähe wurde gegen Ende des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts noch nicht gesehen, gefühlt, gefürchtet – sonst hätte Georg Brandes, ein Jude und liberaler Schriftsteller, den 'aristokratischen Radikalismus' des deutschen Philosophen nicht als neue Nuance entdecken und Propaganda-Vorlesungen darüber halten können: ein Zeichen für das damals noch herrschende Sicherheitsgefühl, die Sorglosigkeit des zur Neige gehenden bürgerlichen Zeitalters, – ein Zeichen aber auch, daß der gewiegte dänische Kritiker Nietzsches Barbarismus nicht ernst, nicht eigentlich nahm, ihn cum grano salis verstand [...]" (Mann, *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*, p. 46.)

Not only female, but male endorsement of this philosopher tended to proceed along selective lines, based on specific needs that required a conscious attempt at revaluations of already beleaguered norms.<sup>70</sup> To apply these observations to *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, it is evident that this novel takes up precisely the theme of the “new man” who is an individual able to function in contravention of “custom and tradition”, as highlighted by Taylor. But, as previously remarked, the narrative proposition here is an *interrogation* and re-evaluation of the meaning of an “evolved human being”, posited by Nietzsche in his later tracts as the “Übermensch”.

Beyond the depiction of Fahrke as a force of nature, the exploration of the effects of his “Riesenwille” (EMM, p. 103) in practice finally posits him not only as an unviable social proposition, but as self-destructive. His social unviability is portrayed when his father dies and he immediately makes his mother homeless in order to access the equity of the family home to realise his own ambitions. His mother is compelled to find refuge with her “Schwester [...] die ihr ein Kämmerchen abließ” and she dies not long after, “zurückgezogen [...] unter dem schlichten Holzkreuz des Gatten (EMM, pp. 148-9). Fahrke’s lack of morals, according to Nietzsche a positive attribute of the *Übermensch*, consequentially leads him to respond with a purely egocentric attitude. Thus after impregnating the fifteen-year-old daughter of a labourer at the ironworks, he is confronted by, but cowers her father. Reported speech is used to condense the episode:

Warum paßten die Heuochsen nicht besser auf ihre Familien auf? Hatte das Mädel keine Mutter? He? Keine Religion? Keine Erziehung? Zu solchem Handel [...] gehörten doch zwei! [...] Beschwerden? Was? Beschwerden? Ob er sich wolle auslachen lassen? Er solle das Mädchen in die Stadt schicken und das Maul halten. [...] Zießenis nahm die paar Goldstücke [...] und ging grollend: “Is doch ‘ne häßliche Geschichte, Herr Ingenieur.” (EMM, pp. 206-7)

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<sup>70</sup> Nietzsche’s treatise *Menschliches, allzu Menschliches* observes “Fortschritt” as being the consequence of a foregoing process of collective attrition, resulting from the effects of “abartende Naturen”: “Unzählige dieser Art, gehen, ihrer Schwäche wegen, ohne sehr ersichtliche Wirkung zu Grunde; aber im Allgemeinen [...] lockern sie auf und bringen von Zeit zu Zeit dem stabilen Elemente eines Gemeinwesens eine Wunde bei.” A moderate and judicious stance is still visible in the comment that “[des Gemeinwesens] Kraft im Ganzen muss aber stark genug sein, um dieses Neue in sein Blut aufzunehmen und sich zu assimiliren”, while “jedem Fortschritt im Grossen muss eine theilweise Schwächung vorhergehen. Die stärksten Naturen halten den Typus fest, die schwächeren helfen ihn fortbilden.” (Nietzsche, “Anzeichen höherer und niederer Cultur”).

The episode darkly echoes Nietzsche's recommendation that "das Kleinere sich dem Grösseren hingiebt, dass es Lust und Macht am Kleinsten habe".<sup>71</sup> Fahrke's forceful presence and ability to 'speak their language' (cf. EMM, pp. 204-5) enables him single-handedly to intimidate the rebellious workers during their uprising. This circumstance prompts Erwin to promote him to "Betriebsleiter" in a gesture of "Selbstüberwindung" (EMM, p. 283), directly to signal the narrative's ironic referentiality in *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Irony is substantiated, moreover, in the selective endorsement of this text's best-known and notorious aphorism. The act of turning hundreds of workers, including their families out of their homes and livelihoods without notice, "alle [...] denen der Ingenieur persönlich nicht wohlwollte" (EMM, p. 247) in his new capacity of "Betriebsleiter", proceeds with Erwin's conscious agreement in order to save the business from bankruptcy, thus to prevent the dismissal of *all* employees:

Hart muß sein, wer Menschen leiten, wer Menschen nützen will, dachte [Erwin], grausam, unerbittlich wie die Natur, die auch hundert Leben vernichtet, damit hunderttausend gedeihen. Aber die Natur ist blind. Da liegt der Unterschied. Uns sehen die Augen unserer Opfer an, wenn wir sie unsern Göttern oder Götzen schlachten. (EMM, p. 332)

The Protestant-connoted idea of emotional control, applied to Erwin, confronts the rumination

aber wehe allen Liebenden, die nicht noch eine Höhe haben, welche über ihrem Mitleiden ist! Also sprach der Teufel einst zu mir: 'auch Gott hat seine Hölle: das ist seine Liebe zu den Menschen.' [...] Alle Schaffenden aber sind hart."<sup>72</sup>

Narratorial endorsement of this sentiment, however, is a strictured one. The passage includes the assertion "Gott ist todt", the cause of his death being "Mitleiden mit den Menschen." *Ein moderner Märtyrer* criticises insincere morality, including the behaviour of pastors. Yet as has been seen, it promotes spirituality as conscience and compassion, or "Menschenliebe", which was anathema to Nietzsche. Thomas Mann points out that while Nietzsche "hätte nichts gegen ein neues Ideal" in the form of an "ästhetischen Religion a la Buddha [...]" he reassures readers that "allgemeine

<sup>71</sup> Nietzsche, "Von der Selbstüberwindung", <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3248/45>>.

<sup>72</sup> Nietzsche, "Von den Mitleidigen", in <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3248/36>>.

Menschenliebe wird es nicht sein'." Mann counters with the question, "und wenn es nun gerade dies wäre?"<sup>73</sup> To evaluate *Ein moderner Märtyrer's* critique of the philosopher, Mann's considerations in the wake of the holocaust provide relevant context:

Die Verteidigung des Instinkts gegen Vernunft und Bewußtheit war eine zeitliche Korrektur. Die dauernde, ewig notwendige Korrektur bleibt die des Lebens durch den Geist – oder die Moral, wenn man will. Wie zeitgebunden, wie theoretisch auch, wie unerfahren mutet uns Nietzsches Romantisierung des Bösen heute an! Wir haben es in seiner ganzen Miserabilität kennengelernt und sind nicht mehr Ästheteten genug, uns vor dem Bekenntnis zum Guten zu fürchten, uns so trivialer Begriffe und Leitbilder zu schämen wie Wahrheit, Freiheit, Gerechtigkeit.<sup>74</sup>

Mann's view is that Nietzsche created fallacy through his

ganz und gar falsche Verhältnis, in das er Leben und Moral zueinander bringt, wenn er sie als Gegensätze behandelt. Die Wahrheit ist, sie gehören zusammen. Ethik ist Lebensstütze, und der moralische Mensch ein rechter Lebensbürger.<sup>75</sup>

His view finds corroboration not only in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, but also in the depth-psychological viewpoints forwarded by Erich Neumann, Gerhard Adler and Carl Jung, as previously discussed.<sup>76</sup> In the novel, ironic use of "Selbstüberwindung", which causes Erwin to endure and even to promote Fahrke, unequivocally points to the fundamental importance of *motivation* when it comes to the ethical condition of an action. Erwin proves himself above his "Mitleiden" by permitting the sacrifice of hundreds in order to save thousands, while "im Herzen des Betrübtesten unter allen war mehr Sonnenschein, mehr Mut der Hoffnung als in seinem" (EMM, p. 250). Fahrke's motivation, conversely, is "die Schweinhunde unter[zu]kriegen, gründlich! Ein für allemal!" (EMM, p. 208), for which reason he is "ein großer Mann an diesem Tage" (EMM, p. 248). The engineer's will to power is perhaps most starkly depicted when he requisitions the army without Erwin's knowledge:

Biegen oder brechen heißt es im Kampf des Lebens! Wenn er sich heute Abend aufschwang zum tatsächlichen Herrn und Meister in Arnsfelde, - die blutenden,

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<sup>73</sup> Nietzsche, quoted in: Mann, *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*, p. 51.

<sup>74</sup> Mann, *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*, pp. 50-1.

<sup>75</sup> Mann, *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*, p. 32.

<sup>76</sup> For the previous discussion, cf. "Autobiography as *Heimatliteratur*", pp. 107-9; p. 108, footnote 69. (Cf. also, Erich Neumann. *Depth Psychology and a New Ethics*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1969, pp. 13-7.)

zuckenden Leiber von ein paar niedergeknallten Aufrührern sollten ihm die Freude daran nicht verderben! (EMM, pp. 211-2)

The combination of “Geberde” (EMM, p. 250), and, more amusingly, of his “Hurrastimme” (EMM, p. 206) with an implacable will finally amounts to a sardonically rendered profile of a dictator. Fahrke’s effectiveness is a reciprocal phenomenon:

Fahrke mit seinen großen Bewegungen, den rollenden Augen, den buschigen Haaren, mit der groben Stimme, die nicht niederzuschreien, nicht zu ersticken war, Fahrke, der ihre Sprache redete, war ganz der Mann, Volksmassen anzufeuern und zu bändigen nach seinem Willen. (EMM, p. 225)

It is here again the “Volk” which is “zum Gehorchen geboren” that “pfeift [...] auf Selbstbestimmung und läuft dem nach, der am lautesten und rücksichtslosigsten befiehlt” (EMM, p. 199), and which “liebt dramatische Auftritte, aufregende Schaustellungen” (EMM, p. 115). The collective mentality, as “Sumpf”, creates not citizens but subjects susceptible to browbeating and manipulation, this time not led by revolutionaries, but by a compelling tyrant, to anticipate the circumstances of National Socialism and the fascist regime thirty-seven years after the publication of this text.

### An Umwertung of Individuality: Non-heroic Masculinity

Erwin's personality can be termed an ironic revaluation of Nietzsche's own values<sup>77</sup> insofar as he embodies attributes such as "zart" (EMM, p. 145), "nervös" (EMM, p. 203) "geduldig" (EMM, p. 191) and "bleich" (EMM, p. 192), which traditionally served as descriptors for women. Along similar lines, the unswerving and tenacious love which he bears his "Werk" is likened to that of a real mother, rather than a father (EMM, p. 363).<sup>78</sup> His slight physicality, nervous disposition, and specifically, philanthropy, hardly recalls Nietzsche's vision of a society in the hands of supermen, as Berghahn summarises it:

In the Nietzschean world view, the domination of the 'herd' was replaced by an aristocracy of the strongest and most brutal. The place of Christian-humanist principles was filled by pitilessness and pride. Pain was given a positive connotation, because it offered the chance to overcome it. Happiness was replaced by heroic creativity.<sup>79</sup>

Yet as well as having apparent feminine attributes, Erwin is the "Märtyrer" and herald of a new time, who alone is capable "[den] Sumpf [zu] bewegen", a theme of Nietzsche's earlier and lesser known text *Morgenröthe*,<sup>80</sup> which is here posited against *Zarathustra*'s superman. Several observers note that the latter was the text that most people were, at times only fleetingly, familiar with. Hinton Thomas, for instance, levels

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<sup>77</sup> The idea of an "Umwerthung aller Werthe" (cf. for instance, Friedrich Nietzsche. "Warum ich ein Schicksal bin", in: *Ecce Homo*, <[http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk\\_files=1466164&pageno=2](http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1466164&pageno=2)>.) is based in the theory that "Leben [...] ist Wille zur Macht" (Friedrich Nietzsche. *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*. Leipzig: Reclam, 1886, pp. 19, 153. Online version: Project Gutenberg-DE. <<http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/3250/1>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013), in turn derived from Nietzsche's patriarchal and neo-Darwinistic assumptions, is a central tenet that appears throughout his works.

<sup>78</sup> His "Liebe zu meinem Werk" is here described as being that of an "echte[n] Mutter". This avowal of a mother's love can be seen to be polemical, since it is in dialogue with misogynistic tracts concerned with this topic, which were prominent at this time. Compare, for instance, Arthur Schopenhauer and Leo Berg's views: "The first love of a mother, as that of animals and men, is purely *instinctive*, and consequently ceases when the child is no longer physically helpless. [...] The love of a father for his children is of a different nature and more sincere; it is [...] metaphysical in its origin." (Arthur Schopenhauer. "On Women", in: *Misogyny*. <<http://www.theabsolute.net/misogyny/onwomen.html>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.) "Die Elternliebe unterscheidet sich genau wie die Geschlechtsliebe. Die väterliche Liebe ist pädagogisch, bildend, positiv, fördernd, lenkend [...] aktiv; die mütterliche passiv, zärtlich abwehrend [...] Der Vater steht über dem Sohn wie ein Gott. (Leo Berg. *Das Sexuelle Problem In Kunst Und Leben*. Berlin: Hermann Walther, 1901, pp. 78-8.)

<sup>79</sup> Berghahn, *Imperial Germany*, p. 180.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche. *Morgenröthe*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1881, p. 34.

a charge of superficiality, and even hypocrisy, at exponents of the “New Morality” movement within the *Frauenbewegung*:

[Helene Stöcker] was a major mediator of Nietzsche within the feminist movement. [...] She was relatively familiar with Nietzsche, whereas many, perhaps the majority, knew about him mainly from gossip. In a sense, the less familiar one was with his work at first hand, the easier it was to bandy about words and phrases which were now so much in the cultural air, such as ‘saying yes to life’, ‘joy’, ‘revaluation’ [...] what many knew about Nietzsche was mainly heresy – if they had read anything at all, it was often only *Thus spake Zarathustra*.<sup>81</sup>

The use of a motif from *Morgenröthe* to subvert some (though not all) of the tenets of *Also sprach Zarathustra*, along with the ironic appropriation of a core precept of *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* and *Ecce Homo*, the “Umwertung aller Werte”, are moves in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* that are not indicative of a facile engagement with Nietzsche’s work. Akin to his admirers, the novel registers individuality as the urgent need of the time, yet does not accept the premises behind Nietzsche’s theories about this concept. The novel’s critical stance, further, means avoidance of the emotional susceptibility of the Nietzsche cult.<sup>82</sup>

*Ein moderner Märtyrer* demonstrates an intuitive anticipation of barren reception when the intrinsic value of individuality is aligned with an *a priori* concept of “Schöpfung” (EMM, p. 4). This concept serves as a refutation of mechanistically conceived notions of evolution, which tend to lead to an over-emphasis on cultural construction in meaning-formation and perception. Individuality in this context possesses an intrinsicality which is contingent neither on approbation nor on disapproval. Erwin reiterates his position in renewing his leadership towards the end of the novel:

Es hat zu allen Zeiten Thoren gegeben, die es nicht lassen konnten ihre Hand ins Feuer zu legen, die zu hren Versuchen mit verbissener Hartnäckigkeit, jeder

<sup>81</sup> Thomas, *Nietzsche in German Politics*, p. 91. – The charge is somewhat unfortunately levelled, given the historical propagation of the idea of women’s susceptibility to dilettantism. The wish to portray an up-to-date self-image notwithstanding inadequate substantiation did not apply specifically to exponents of the New Morality. T. Mann, for instance, observes that Nietzsche’s “Mode- und Gassenwirkung” was describable as “eine Art von hektischer Kraft- und ‘Schönheits’-Anbetung” across society. (Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*, p. 138.)

<sup>82</sup> Westkirch’s breadth of engagement with Nietzsche’s works can further be taken from the title of her novel *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* ([Leipzig: Reclam], 1902), a narrative that in 1921 was used as the basis for the film *Aus den Tiefen der Großstadt*. (Cf *Aus den Tiefen der Großstadt*. Motion picture (1921). *IMDb*. <<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1802918/>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.) – Although the novel ran to five editions until 1924, it is now one of the rarest of this author’s texts.



schlimmen Erfahrung zum Hohn. Es pflegt ihnen nicht besonders gut zu gehen. Wie ein gefährlicher Bergpfad gezeichnet ist mit Kreuzen, zum Gedächtnis der darauf abgestürzten armen Wanderer, so zeichnet durch die Weltgeschichte eine breite Straße von Marterpfählen und Scheiterhaufen den Weg, den diese wunderlichen Heiligen nahmen, den Weg, auf dem manchmal, nach Jahrhunderten, die von ihnen verfochtene Idee ihren Siegeszug hielt in die eroberte Welt, – manchmal auch nicht. Sie aber thaten, was sie nicht lassen konnten. Von diesen seltsamen Käuzen bin ich einer. (EMM, p. 351)

Affirmation of visionary idealism as farsighted, rather than as quixotic is here categorical: it is viewed as ahead of its time, rather than as naïve – a further, emphatic nod at a potentially dismissive academically-invested readership. Erwin's vision is ultimately not contingent on approbation and material success – in keeping with the Nietzschean motto, the individualist here bases his work on intrinsic value, rather than on collective approval. An idea may come to fruition after centuries, or maybe not even then, yet integrity demands pursuit.

### *Femininity as Untameable Nature*

The semi-aristocratic Florence Hadeln may be termed the most complex character in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, not only in herself, but in what she means in the context of contemporaneous society. A counterpoint to both Erwin and Fahrke, she incorporates both reality and illusion within her conflicted psyche. Initially, Erwin pursues her because she is the complement to his idealistic nature. He intuitively feels that she

willkürlich und selbstherrlich war wie die Natur selbst, üppig und phantastisch wie die wilden Ranken am Bach, die nie eine Menschenhand beschnitten, an den steifen Stock der Sitte gebunden hat. [...] Ihn berauschte die absolute Rücksichtslosigkeit, mit der dies Mädchen sich auslebte, furchtlos, skrupellos, ohne Reue und ohne Bedauern, in der großartigen Unschuld ihres Egoismus, der nur sich sah und keinen anderen. [...] sie hatte keine Grundsätze, nur Instinkte, nur Leidenschaften. Sie strebte nicht, ein bestimmtes Ideal von Sittlichkeit durch sich zu verwirklichen. Es genügte ihr, die zu sein, die sie war, zufällig war [...] sie war gefährlich, gefährlich wie das Meer, wie der Vulkan, wie die Flamme; unberechenbar und morallos wie irgend etwas Elementares, das sein Gesetz in sich trägt und nur aus sich nimmt, und die guten Philister taten recht sich vor ihr zu bekreuzen. (EMM, p. 123-4)

This portrayal creates a complex relationship to patriarchal constructions of femininity that argue its inferiority on account of its alignment with nature. It appropriates the existentialist tenet of amoral nature as power and ultimate reality – the positive significance of Nietzsche begins to become apparent here – and attributes this to Florence. Patriarchal viewpoints of female nature can be characterised as contradictory, while invariably vested in male dominion. Thus by the late nineteenth century, women were viewed as *mere* “repositories of natural laws”,<sup>83</sup> on account of which they were passive, submissive and domestic, as well as weak and predisposed to psycho-pathology,<sup>84</sup> but also wild and dangerous because, “endowed with less reason than men”, they were “more easily dominated by extreme emotions”. In the final analysis, they were not only *controllable* because, “subsumed under nature’s laws”, they could be “revealed and understood”, but were also *in need of being controlled*: “their potential for disorder can be minimized by drawing and maintaining strong social

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<sup>83</sup> L.J. Jordanova. “Natural facts: a historical perspective on science and sexuality”, in: Carol MacCormick/Marilyn Strathern. *Nature, Culture and Gender*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 66.

<sup>84</sup> Anne Digby comments on the historicity of medical opinion, which simultaneously aimed at professional self-validation and at providing scientific confirmation of the relegation of women to morally and intellectually inferior, and thus to non-credible status, by pathologising them on the grounds of biology. She identifies the startling pervasiveness of such views from a comment in a “standard Victorian textbook on psychological medicine” published in 1874, which “approvingly quot[es] Professor Laycock’s *Treatise on the Nervous Diseases of Women*” (cf. Thomas Laycock. *Treatise on the Nervous Diseases of Women*. London: Longman, 1840): “Women in whom the generative organs are developed or in action are those most liable to hysterical disease. Indeed, the general fact is so universally acknowledged, and so constantly corroborated by daily experience, that anything in the nature of proof is unnecessary.” (Sir John Charles Bucknill and Daniel Hack Tuke, quoted in: Anne Digby. “Women’s Biological Straitjacket”, in: Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall. *Sexuality and Subordination. Interdisciplinary Studies of Gender in the Nineteenth Century*. London/New York: Routledge, 1989, p. 202.) The legacy here outlined was, of course, an active one at the turn of century. Catherine Dollard notes that “early Freudian writings on sexuality had enormous influence on the ways in which *Sexualwissenschaftler* assessed the female experience of nervous illnesses” in Germany: “One of five cases in Freud and Breuer’s 1895 *Studies on Hysteria* [...] is central to understanding the ways in which sexologists linked marital status to hysteria. [...] The Freudian diagnosis of hysteria always required sexual repression; other circumstances were predispositional.” Thus Freud began to divine the answer that his patient “did not want to be *alleinstehende Frau*. Fear of never marrying helped to make [her] a hysteric. The means of this process was a mechanism Freud termed ‘symbolization’: ‘She found...a somatic expression for her lack of an independent position’.” (Sigmund Freud, quoted in: Catherine Dollard. “The alte Jungfer as New Deviant: Representation, Sex, and the Single Woman in Imperial Germany”, in: *German Studies Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Feb., 2006), p. 116. Cf. also, Sigmund Freud. “Case 5: Fräulein Elisabeth von R”, in: *Studies on Hysteria*. Boston: A.A. Brill Beacon Press, 1895, p. 161.) It is here apparent that Freud’s failure to see “two sexes whose differences are articulated in the act of intercourse, and, more generally speaking, in the imaginary and symbolic processes that regulate the workings of a society and a culture”, is a determining tenet of his psychoanalytical theory – the cause of his patient’s malady, as formulated in practice, merely confirms contemporaneous beliefs about women’s constitutional dependence of men. It thus functions not as discovery, but as reiteration of a concept of femininity that is “always described in terms of deficiency or atrophy, as the other side of the sex that alone holds a monopoly on value: the male sex.” (Luce Irigaray. (Catherine Porter transl.) *This Sex Which is Not One*. Ithaca/New York: Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 69.) Cf. also “Introduction”, pp. 41-2.

boundaries around them.”<sup>85</sup> This section will be concerned with the import of the way in which nature is attributed to Florence, and with how nature and culture determine her trajectory.

Nature, as essence or primal temperament prior to, and visible behind, Florence’s socially adapted personality, is both self-referential and her essential health. The depiction stands in stark contrast to interpretations such as that of Schopenhauer:

That woman is by nature intended to obey is shown by the fact that every woman who is placed in the unnatural position of absolute independence at once attaches herself to some kind of man, by whom she is controlled and governed; this is because she requires a master.<sup>86</sup>

He attributes the dependency of women, notwithstanding their conceptual and political disenfranchisement, to nature, to prefigure and condition evolutionary views about women as less evolved than men, which continued to be in vogue around the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>87</sup> An example of the scientifically-clad misogynistic wish to claim power for men is the tract by Otto Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter*, which puts forward a hierarchical idea of morality, the opposite or psychological shadow of which is *amorality*, rather than immorality. Thus he asks,

Wie kann nur aber eine Frau, wenn sie an sich seelenlos ist, Seele beim Mann perzipieren, wie seine Moralität beurteilen, da sie selbst amoralisch ist, wie seine Charakterstärke auffassen, ohne als Person Charakter zu haben, wie seinen Willen spüren, obgleich sie doch eigenen Willen nicht besitzt?<sup>88</sup>

According to Weininger’s scheme, “das Weib” is “immer nur amoralisch” because she is not capable of formulating viewpoints that could be termed “antimoralisch”.<sup>89</sup> Immoral

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<sup>85</sup> Jordanova, “Natural facts”, pp. 66-7.

<sup>86</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer. “On Women”, in: <<http://www.theabsolute.net/misogyny/onwomen.html>. Accessed 23 June 2012>. – The tract was originally published in 1851.

<sup>87</sup> In a recent discussion of evolutionary-based racial and gender prejudice, Chandak Sengoopta sees Charles Darwin as one of the nineteenth-century catalysts in the shift of gender discourse parameters to the scientific realm. He points out that Darwin was *more* entrenched in respect of the justifiability of women’s subjugation on evolutionary grounds than he was in speculations about racial origins in terms of inferiority and superiority. (Cf. Chandak Sengoopta. Lecture 8. “‘Social Darwinism’ and the Natural Basis of Society”, in: *Darwin, Darwinism and the Modern World*. Recorded Books, LLC, 2004. Cf. also, Sally Gregory Kohlstedt/Mark R. Jorgensen. “‘The Irrespressible Woman Question’: Women’s Responses to Evolutionary Ideology”, in: Ronald L. Numbers/John Stenhouse (eds.). *Disseminating Darwinism: The Role of Place, Race, Religion and Gender*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 269-273.)

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Otto Weininger. *Geschlecht und Charakter. Eine prinzipielle Untersuchung von Otto Weininger*. Vienna/Leipzig: Braumüller University, 1903, pp. 271-2; cf. also “Introduction”, p. 42.

<sup>89</sup> Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter*, p. 303.

viewpoints are here conceived of as being worth engaging with because they issue from a position of comprehension, and thus function within acknowledged, or dominant, discourse parameters; amorality, by contrast, is merely the signifier for inferior stature. Similarly, for Leo Berg “[ist] der Mann [...] in der Macht. Aus seiner Unnatur heraus herrscht er über das Weib, herrscht er über die Gesellschaft”,<sup>90</sup> with women only becoming “Menschen [...] durch Mutterschaft”; thus “Weiber mit der Kinderscheu sind Entartete oder Verbrecher”.<sup>91</sup> Although these tracts were published a few years after *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, the novel demonstrates an acute awareness of the types of viewpoint they contain. Weininger’s sentiment is refuted in the way Florence’s *amorality* is posited. In agreeing that amoral nature is the quintessence of women by attributing it to Florence, it is, simultaneously, uncontrollable power *and* the inescapable reality underlying all human consciousness. It is neither controllable nor irrational, both of which are implicitly recognised as culturally-based assumptions about nature, and instead simply is, an *a priori* reality. This viewpoint is amplified in Erwin’s view of revolution as an “elementare[r] Ausbruch” that could “wie ein überschäumender Gießbach” annihilate culture, which by contrast is likened to a “sorgsam auf den Fels getragene Ackerkrume” (EMM, p. 87). The patriarchal view, which sees nature and culture as opposites and attributes power (and men) to culture, is here reversed.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, Leo Berg’s idea, which enlists pathologising viewpoints, is parodied in Fifi Hadeln, who has internalised them: “Nein, sehen Sie, ein weibliches Wesen, das keine Liebe zu Kindern hat, das – das ist in meinen Augen kein Mensch” (EMM, p. 129). Vesting this viewpoint in a female protagonist calls to mind that internalisation of prevailing gender polemics was evident in high-profile female reactionaries, such as Laura Marholm, who “wield[ed] the pen as a powerful polemical tool” in “fiction,

<sup>90</sup> Leo Berg. *Das Sexuelle Problem in Kunst und Leben*. Berlin: Hermann Walther, 1901, p. 33.

<sup>91</sup> Leo Berg. *Das Sexuelle Problem in Kunst und Leben*. Berlin: Hermann Walther, 1901, pp. 76, 77.

<sup>92</sup> Carol MacCormick refers to indigenous cultures to point out the fallacy which attends the application of logical procedures to define nature: “although the Laymis of Bolivia make a series of associations that may lead us to conclude that wild is identified with female, Laymis themselves do not make that association. ‘To apply ‘logical’ procedures... is to forget that what are being compared are complex concepts, and that in each identification it is different and specific characteristics of these phenomena that are selected for comparison.’” (Olivia Harris, quoted in: Carol MacCormick. “Nature, culture and gender: a critique”, in: MacCormick/Strathern, *Nature, Culture and Gender*, p. 9.)

psychology [and] literary essay” while insisting that the “function [of female consciousness] was submission to genuine maleness”:

By maintaining the validity of a so-called natural female behavior, [Laura] Marholm recreates [...] an idea espoused earlier in the century by Schopenhauer and revitalized in her own time in the works of Nietzsche. By the end of the nineteenth century [...] her writing on feminine psychology, without regard to social, economic, and cultural influences simply reinforced existing stereotypes. In this way, according to her early critics, the intelligentsia simply sanctioned the bourgeois status quo.<sup>93</sup>

The force of the dominant discourse can be evaluated from Helene Lange’s comment in respect of Hedwig Dohm’s work,<sup>94</sup> which challenged stereotypes and thus was “von der Presse entweder völlig ignoriert oder kurz und höhnisch abgefertigt.”<sup>95</sup> Framing Florence as “gefährlich, gefährlich wie das Meer, wie der Vulkan, wie die Flamme; unberechenbar und morallos wie irgend etwas Elementares das sein Gesetz in sich trägt und nur aus sich nimmt” is a narratorial statement of independence that defies efforts by male – and some female – writers to render femininity controllable, whether by viewing it as subordinate because aligned with nature in contradistinction to culture, or because less evolved within hierarchically-conceived nature.

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<sup>93</sup> Marilyn Scott-Jones. “Laura Marholm and the Question of Female ‘Nature’”, in: Susan Cocalis/Kay Goodman (eds.). *Beyond the Eternal Feminine. Critical Essays on Women and German Literature*. Stuttgart: Akademischer Verlag Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1982, pp. 222-3. – Scott-Jones counts Helene Lange and Gertrud Bäumer, champions within the nineteenth-century *Frauenbewegung*, among Marholm’s critics (ibid.).

<sup>94</sup> The texts here referred to are *Jesuitismus im Hausstande*, *Die wissenschaftliche Emanzipation der Frau* and *Das Stimmrecht der Frauen*, which were first published in the 1870s in answer to German academic attempts to dismiss John Stuart Mill (cf. John Stuart Mill. *The Subjection of Women*. London: Longmans, 1869) and which were republished in 1893. (Cf. Hedwig Dohm. *Der Jesuitismus im Hausstande: Ein Beitrag zur Frauenfrage*. Berlin: Wedekind&Schwieger, 1873; Hedwig Dohm. *Die wissenschaftliche Emanzipation der Frau*. Berlin: Wedekind&Schwieger, 1874; Hedwig Dohm. *Das Stimmrecht der Frauen. Zwei Abhandlungen über Eigenschaft und Stimmrecht der Frauen*. Berlin: Wedekind&Schwieger, 1876. Cf. also. Hedwig Dohm. *Der Frauen Natur und Recht*. Berlin: Friedrich Stahn, 1893.)

<sup>95</sup> Lange, *Lebenserinnerungen*, p. 112.

As has been seen, Florence's intense vitality is depicted in terms of natural energy, to describe her spirit and hint at her potential, which, perhaps, is indefinable as well as undefined. Her entirety is not circumscribed by this natural essence, however. She is also constellated as more acutely analytical and insightful than her peers: "ihre großangelegte Natur, ihr scharfer Verstand drängten zur Klarheit und sahen, wo minderbegünstigte Mitschwestern eine Binde um die Augen trugen" (EMM, p. 91). At the same time, her education is described as having been "eine richtige Odyssee [...] jedes System und jede Methode waren an ihr erprobt worden" (EMM, p. 83); she had been assigned to "Bonnen und Gouvernanten aus aller Herren Länder und von jedem Grad von Klugheit und Verschrobenheit" and "hatte auch ein halbes Jahr lang eine Töcherschule besucht und verschiedene Pensionate" (EMM, p. 83). The narrative here incidentally describes a situation common to bourgeois daughters – their education had low priority because its potential and advisability, let alone necessity, were contested. Charlotte Niese, for instance, provides a first-hand account of the need to take her education into her own hands in adult life because although her father was renowned for his pedagogical skill and educated his sons with the effect that they achieved rare academic distinction,<sup>96</sup> and was even "so weitsichtig, daß er mich immer auf einen Beruf hinwies", Niese "wußte genau, daß mein Wissen nur Stückwerk war, und wenn ich auch im Zusammensein mit den Brüdern manches lernte, so war dies doch alles nur gewissermaßen dilettantisch."<sup>97</sup> What must appear to the contemporary reader as wilful parental neglect that, moreover, is unacknowledged by the author, is further contextualised:

Auch ich entsinne mich noch sehr wohl eines halben Onkels, der, als er hörte, daß ich Lehrerin werden wollte, ganz entsetzt ausrief: 'Aber dann kriegst du ganz gewiß

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<sup>96</sup> Cf. Charlotte Niese. *Von gestern und vorgestern*. Leipzig: Grunow, [1924], pp. 137-8, 145.

<sup>97</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 166.

keinen Mann!' Auf meine Gegenfrage: 'Warum denn nicht?' schüttelte er den Kopf. 'Gelehrt ist verkehrt! Frauenzimmer dürfen nicht gelehrt sein!'<sup>98</sup>

The worry that his daughter's chances of marriage, and hence her only satisfactory life trajectory would be jeopardised is therefore likely to have motivated Herr Niese's neglect of his daughter. Helene Lange's autobiography similarly attests that female education was the overriding, long-term goal of the *Frauenbewegung* in the nineteenth century because Germany was backward in respect of the education of girls compared to America, France and England<sup>99</sup> since the 1870s. She observes that in Germany, it was controlled by men who "stellte[n] nach deutscher Gewohnheit Theorien über das Wesen der Frau und der weiblichen Bildung auf". Starkly resonant with the previously observed misogynistic gist, the result was the consensus "deutscher Mädchenschulpädagogen" that the only reason to educate girls was so that "der deutsche Mann nicht durch [...] seine Frau an dem häuslichen Herd gelangweilt und in seiner Hingabe an höhere Interessen gelähmt werde".<sup>100</sup> At the same time, the theoretical assumptions about female potential cause Lange to wonder

Wie aber konnte man sein Leben dem Unterricht so idiotisch veranlagter Wesen widmen, wie konnte man hoffen, dieses Geschlecht jemals auch nur auf eine Höhe zu bringen, die es dem Mann ersparte sich am häuslichen Herde zu langweilen?<sup>101</sup>

While *Ein moderner Märtyrer* comments overtly on the inadequacy of girls' education, this inadequacy is implicitly juxtaposed with both its necessity and potential. Florence observes to Erwin:

"Zu Ihnen hab' ich gesprochen, wie ein Mensch zum Menschen, weil Sie ein Mensch sind, eine Person für sich, ein Individuum, etwas mit eigenem Willen und eigenem Empfinden. Die andern kommen mir immer vor wie Charaktermasken, Typen ihres Standes. [...] Bei allen die gleichen Wünsche, Instinkte, Hoffnungen, die gleichen Züge sogar – die Züge ihres Standes. Kennt man einen davon, kennt man alle. Ich bin kein Herdentier, obgleich als Weib geboren, das heißt als Herdengeschoß par excellence. Ich passe in keinen der vielen Pferche. Das ist mein Stolz – und mein Unglück." (EMM, p. 83)

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<sup>98</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 165.

<sup>99</sup> Lange, *Lebenserinnerungen*, p. 131.

<sup>100</sup> Lange, *Lebenserinnerungen*, p. 127.

<sup>101</sup> Lange, *Lebenserinnerungen*, p. 131.

Her disaffection is the result of analysis that arises from conceptual independence. It does not encompass her entire position: when Erwin goes to confide in her about his business crisis, he

fühlte es wohl, in den kurzen, herben, spöttischen Reden des Mädchens an seiner Seite lag mehr ehrliche Teilnahme, mehr Verständnis [...] als die gefühlvolle Frau Hadeln in einer halbstündigen Kondolenzrede über ihn auszuschütten vermocht hätte. (EMM, p. 172)

Her capacity for empathy is emphasised, yet is shown to be concealed behind mockery, not to indicate dignified emotional self-control, but an emotional habit that stems from disaffection. Disaffection is particularly highlighted in her demeanour, which shows fear of commitment: “etwas ungeduldig Nervöses, Spöttisches lag in ihrer Art sich zu geben, ein Widerwille gegen volltönende Worte, etwas wie Furcht vor der Möglichkeit sich zu begeistern (EMM, p. 31). Erwin divines that her potential is other than the “Karrikatur, die ihre eigenen Lippen entwarfen” (EMM, p. 83), which includes a “feudale Denkweise” (EMM, p. 171) and the notion that “kein Mensch ist’s wert, daß man ihm Opfer bringt. Sich selbst muß man durchsetzen, seinen eigenen Spaß und sein eigenes Glück” (EMM, p. 173). Her egoism, however, is not that of the collective consciousness and it appears to be rather closer to the self-referential kind attributed to Fahrke. Yet a crucial difference exists between them – in him, *amorality* is ultimately shown to be *immoral* because as a man in Wilhelmine society, he is not barred from effecting consequential choices. Florence’s self-referentiality remains *amoral* because societal strictures constrain her sphere of action to the point that for her, neither choice, nor a sense of purpose exists. While amorality is configured as nature *and* universal psychic origin, a remarkable intuitive narratorial turn refutes Weininger’s idea: amorality, when it becomes a condition of personality, rather than being the underlying temperament, is attributed to environmental, rather than evolutionary factors. While Fahrke, therefore, is ultimately shown to be a socially unviable pseudo-individual, the combination of wild nature, independent mind and suppressed compassion, as it occurs in Florence, constellates *individuality*-in-potential. As with Pastor Mahrenholz, it is disidentified from educational status; again it is instead allied with an intrinsic



capacity for consciousness. In respect of Florence, however, the narrative acquires pathos in raising the question whether 'unrealised' means ultimately unrealisable.

### Self-Referentiality and Psycho-Pathology

Florence's sardonic outlook results from the experience that her scope for action is circumscribed:

"Ich langweile mich überall, überall!! Es ist meine Krankheit. Langweilen Sie sich nie?" "Nein! [...] Wie können Sie sich langweilen?" "Weil ich normal aussehe und eine leidliche Partie bin? Meinen Sie das? Aber das ist auch langweilig. Immer hübsch Mittelsorte! Nichts drunter, nichts drüber, nichts Großes, Einziges! Die Welt ist so platt, sag' ich Ihnen, widerlich und dumm, vollgepfropft mit zwecklosen Geschöpfen wie ich." "Was hindert Sie, sich einen Wirkungskreis zu schaffen?" "Soll ich spiritistisches Medium werden? Soll ich Bettelkindern französische Konversation beibringen? Ich kann mir nichts weismachen – ich will's auch nicht! Sich selbst belügen ist das Abgeschmackteste. Ich mag nicht die Füße bewegen und mir einreden, ich liefere." (EMM, p. 80)

The already highlighted immovability of Wilhelmine male assumptions about female inferiority is here configured in its denial of the very potential of originality and individuality in women, and hence of meaningful action that is not associated with procreation. Helene Lange's observations serve as a reminder of Wilhelmine society as *psychological* reality for bourgeois women. They mirror Florence's situation precisely:

Die Begründerinnen des Allgemeinen Deutschen Frauenvereins standen ganz und gar im Gesichtskreis solcher Erfahrungen. Sie sahen um sich herum Mädchen [...] die an der Leere ihres Daseins kranken, und durch unzerbrechliche Sitte und unüberwindbares Vorurteil in dieser Leere verkümmern mußten.<sup>102</sup>

Chris Weedon summarises the cause as a projection that constellates women as *other*:

The way in which men see and define women as not their equals and not fully human makes the combination of sexuality and reason, knowledge and artistic creativity in a woman impossible.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Lange, *Lebenserinnerungen*, pp. 101-2.

<sup>103</sup> Chris Weedon. "Sexuality in Women's Writing", in: David Jackson (ed.) *Taboos in German Literature*. Oxford: Berghahn Books 1996, p. 85.

The complexity of Florence's character, and ultimately the intensity of the narrative, can be seen to arise from the psychological realism that is applied to her. Entrenched, collective denial of primacy and validity, in her case does not find confirmation in her inner, psychic reality. Such confirmation, rather, is found in Fifi Hadeln, the unfulfilled, somewhat hysterical domestic tyrant who fusses without ever achieving real competence (cf. EMM, pp. 130-1). The epitome of her experience is to narrate her children's "Krankheitsgeschichten" to guests who yawn while watching "den Gang der Zeiger auf der Kaminuhr" (EMM, p. 376) during a "Dutzendfest, ohne Wärme, ohne Physiognomie" (EMM, p. 372), which is held at her house. Florence's originality, however, survives *because of* her inability to compromise herself through the avowal of collective mores: she has not internalised actually life-negating values as positive, to the effect that they constitute a 'natural' and necessary part, both of self-image and her world view.<sup>104</sup> The unavailability of a sphere of action commensurate with her nature, as has been seen, results in a personality which does not make ethical responsibility its concern. Florence's self-referentiality is "unschuldig" also insofar as its objective is not domination, but to *feel* authentically: she "[lief] durch die Welt [...] lechzend nach einem echten Gefühl, nach einer Hoffnung, einem Zweck, nach einem Ding, das der Mühe lohnt, es zu wünschen" (EMM, p. 234). It can be termed an act of resistance because it is a prerogative that the prevalent discourse is unable to constrain. The narrative at this point moves beyond the purely conscious agenda: that Florence is "gefährlich [...] wie irgend etwas Elementares" also signals the psychic energy as *reality*, which, when denied outward expression, comes to act autonomously of the conscious will.

The psychological consequences of Florence's situation – her temperament and potential in combination with her social reality – are first intimated in Erwin's reflections after his initial visit to the Hadelns:

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<sup>104</sup> The psychological phenomenon of internalisation which is here implicated has also been discussed in "Autobiography as *Heimatliteratur*", pp. 106, 120, 125. Cf. also "Luise Westkirch's 'Gretchens Liebhaber': Social Critique in *Die Gartenlaube*", p. 220.

“Ein Opfer der sozialen Stellung des Weibes,” dachte Erwin, den sein Herz zu allen Unterdrückten hinriß. “Gewaltsam legen wir Fähigkeiten und Thatendrang der einen Hälfte der Menschheit in Ketten, beschneiden sie, ersticken sie, oder gönnen ihnen statt zweckbewußten Sichauslebens nur ein unnützes Spielen und Tändeln. Wie wundern wir uns dann, daß gesunde Säfte zu Gift verbittern und kräftig erkeimte Pflanzen zu wüßtem, unfruchtbarem Gerank entarten? Wir wollten nicht, daß sie sich entfalten wollten nach ihrer Art. Unser ist die Schuld. Den ungeheuren Lebenstrieb, den wir nicht töten konnten, haben wir krank gemacht. (EMM, p. 91)

The observation that “gesunde Säfte”, or libido, turn “unfruchtbar” or “krank” when suffocated is evidenced when Florence proclaims herself to be not only bored, but “ohne Herz” (EMM, p. 138). It is her already alluded-to advocacy of war, however, from which she would not shield her own son (EMM, p. 126), that signals the presence of *unconscious* psychological factors. These are partially locatable as heredity:

Vielleicht hatte Florence es ihr [her mother] im tiefsten Herzen bis zur Stunde nicht verziehen, daß sie ihr zum Vater einen Industriellen gab, und jedenfalls war sie selbst in den ungewohnten Verhältnissen niemals froh und heimisch geworden. Sie starb, zweiundzwanzig Jahre alt, bei der Geburt der Tochter, der sie als Erbteil das vornehm hochmütige Gesicht ihrer Ahnen und ihre eigene, unbefriedigt schweifende Sehnsucht zurückließ. (EMM, p. 83)

Florence’s ideal, “der altfranzösische Adel 1793, der zum Schafott ging, ein Witzwort auf der Zunge, ein Lächeln um die Lippen”<sup>105</sup> (EMM, p. 212) enables her to maintain her inward defiance of the “Windstille, [der] Öde, [der] Erbärmlichkeit, [der] Langeweile” (EMM, p. 177). In keeping with her aristocratic orientation, Florence proclaims:

Wenn ich je etwas geträumt, gewünscht habe, wenn etwas, seit ich denken, kann, mir als unübertrefflich schön vorschwebte – dieses war’s: Auf dem Rücken eines mutigen Pferdes sitzen – durch die Luft schmettert ein frischer Marsch, die Kugeln pfeifen links und rechts, und vorwärts! auf das feindliche Karree! – Sehen Sie, das ist Leben, das ist Glück! Und wollen Sie den beklagen den mitten in solchem Rausch von Seligkeit die tödliche Kugel trifft? Er hat sein Dasein ausgekostet bis zur Neige! Er hat gewollt und seinen Willen durchgerungen. Was kann einer mehr? (EMM, p. 126)

Appropriation of the aristocratic sentiment to allude to Nietzsche’s “Verherrlichung des Krieges” constructs a poignant, gendered interrogation of his tenets. Florence’s

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<sup>105</sup> Friedrich August Ludwig von der Marwitz encapsulates the traditional alignment of the aristocracy with military service, along with its prejudice against the commoner: “It is not possible to seek the origin of the aristocracy anywhere else than in military service. Favour and money have nothing noble in themselves, and therefore no ground for nobility. Kings can distribute titles as a mark of favour or for the sake of money, and also give away the name of noble – by this means they can create elegant men, but not nobles. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the speculator or boorish shopkeeper will be visible in the children of bankers and merchants, of ideologists and citizens of the world; the trade instincts hide in them, ideas of profit are always before their eyes, i.e. they are and remain common. The son of a noble [...] will always shun a mean action.” (Marwitz, quoted in: Ernest Bramsted. *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes in Germany. Social Types in German Literature 1830-1900*. Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1967, p. 27.)

regressive fantasy predisposes her to project characteristics commensurate with aristocratic life-values onto another person in idealised form. Although the phenomenon of projection has been recognised for millennia in theological and mystical thought, such as, for instance, Christianity, Sufism and Buddhism,<sup>106</sup> *Ein moderner Märtyrer* anticipates specifics of this psychological process that have more recently been documented in psychoanalytic practice. While to Sigmund Freud it is solely a negative compensatory activity, involving the projection of socially unacceptable attributes onto others,<sup>107</sup> Carl Jung views the phenomenon as potentially involving repressed positive, as well as negative values. It is also ubiquitous:

Just as we tend to assume that the world is as we see it, we naively suppose that people are as we imagine them to be. In this latter case, unfortunately, there is no scientific test that would prove the discrepancy between perception and reality. Although the possibility for gross deception is infinitely greater here than in our perception of the physical world, we still go on naively projecting our own psychology into our fellow human beings. In this way everyone creates for himself a series of more or less imaginary relationships based essentially on projection. [...] There are even cases where fantasy projections provide the sole means of human relationship. [...] It is the natural and given thing for unconscious contents to be projected. In a comparatively primitive person this creates that characteristic relationship to the object which Levy-Bruhl has fittingly called 'mystic identity' or 'participation mystique.' Thus every normal person of our time, who is not reflective beyond the average, is bound to his environment by a whole system of projections.<sup>108</sup>

Howard Tyas emphasises that Jung's exposition does not mean that projections proceed solely subjectively: "there may be a 'hook' in the other person upon which to hang the projection you are experiencing."<sup>109</sup> Jung qualifies that

something that strikes me about the object may very well be a real property of that object. [...] It frequently happens that the object offers a hook to the projection, and

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<sup>106</sup> The Gospel of Matthew references the phenomenon in a discourse about judgement: "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:3, *New International Version*.) A Zen Buddhist saying attributed to the ninth century Buddhist master Lin Chi admonishes Zen practitioners not to project their own inner truth on another person: "If you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him!" The saying has been adopted, for instance, by Sheldon Kopp for psychotherapeutic purposes. (Cf. Sheldon Kopp. *If You Meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him! The Pilgrimage of Psychotherapy Patients*. Toronto: Bantam Books, 1985.) The thirteenth-century Sufi Jalal al-Din Rumi's saying "We are the mirror as well as the face in it [...] we are pain and what cures pain, both" has similarly interpreted at a psychological level, as the need to own projected contents because of the implied inseparability of subject and object. (Cf. Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī. (Coleman Barks/John Moyne transl.) *The Essential Rumi*. New York: Harper Collins, 1994, p. 106.)

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Carole Wade/Carol Tavris. *Psychology*. New York: HarperCollins, 1993, p. 433.

<sup>108</sup> Carl Gustav Jung. *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*. Collected Works. Volume 8. London: Routledge, 1991, p. 264.

<sup>109</sup> Howard Tyas. "All of Life is a Projection", in: *Jungian Analytic Praxis*. <<http://www.jungiananalyticpraxis.com/lectures-workshops-articles.html>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.

even lures it out. This is generally the case when the object himself (or herself) is not conscious of the quality in question.<sup>110</sup>

Nathan Schwartz-Salant further exemplifies how the process potentially proceeds either negatively or positively. In his view, it can involve defence

against personally experiencing [...] negative feelings, or else it can represent the healthy mobilization of the positive Self in the form of projection: one's own better or potential qualities are 'transferred' to another and experienced as characteristics of that person.<sup>111</sup>

In the context of *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, Florence falls prey to an *idealised* projection on the basis of her disempowered state of being and the grandeur of her compensatory fantasies. Fahrke, whom she originally disdains due to his unrefined demeanour (EMM, pp. 134-5), symbolically plays the role of a triumphant warrior during the workers' uprising (cf. EMM, pp. 223-6), and thereby provides the psychological 'hook' for Florence's projection.

On account of the culturally transcendent and archetypal stature of the concepts of hero and warrior, Fahrke comes to embody the attribute of *greatness* for Florence:

Florence sagte nichts. Die ganze, lange Zeit hatte sie neben der offenen Balkontür gestanden, im roten Fackelschein des brennenden Maschinenhauses bald auf Fahrke, bald auf die empörte Flut zu seinen Füßen schauend. [...] Es war wie eine Verzauberung, die sie im Bann hielt, unwiderstehlich, übermächtig. Sie dachte, sie erwog nicht mehr; sie wollte, wählte nicht. Sie stand und sah, und all ihr Leben war in ihren Augen. [...] Mit einem Aufatmen wandte sie sich ins Zimmer zurück. Und alles schien ihr verändert, kleiner der Saal [...] erbärmlicher die Menschen. Groß, riesenhaft, begeisternd groß war nur der eine auf dem Balkon, im Flammenschein, über der tobenden Menge; die andern alle Zwerge, kalt, fremd. (EMM, pp. 227-8)

The one-sidedness of the notion of "greatness", an almost obsessive preoccupation in Wilhelmine politics as well as in Nietzsche's thinking, is here elaborated ironically: there *is* an element of grandeur in Fahrke's capacity to dominate a multitude, which is not denied. Yet Florence's glorified perception of him is contingent on her blindness to the actual effects of his ruthlessness in human relationships, which are already apparent to

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<sup>110</sup> Jung. *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, p. 273.

<sup>111</sup> Nathan Schwartz-Salant. *Narcissism and Character Transformation*. Toronto: Inner City Books, 1982, p. 43.

the reader. Tragic import is added by the novel's psychological realism: the terms "Verzauberung", "Bann" and "unwiderstehlich" are apt descriptions of the potential impact of the Unconscious on the conscious ego and effectively strip Florence's intoxication of its Dionysian glamour. Marie-Louise von Franz observes that although attending to unconscious processes is "the most beneficent thing [...] the dream world can also devour a person by way of daydreaming, spinning neurotic fantasies, or chasing unrealistic ideas."<sup>112</sup> Its ultimate "devouring" potential, the manifestation of psychosis, is explored in narratives such as Gabriele Reuter's previously mentioned *Aus guter Familie*, as well as in Hedwig Dohm's *Werde, die du bist*. Florence does not succumb to the extent that the respective protagonists of these narratives, Agathe and Agnes, do, but equally fatefully, consigns her future to the dream image of the warrior because she can neither surrender her authenticity, nor live it. Her erstwhile pseudo-independent assertion, "mündig bin ich sonst. Und dreinreden laß ich mir auch nicht" (EMM, p. 177) here acquires pathos.

The possibility that the Unconscious can overwhelm the ego and engender behaviour motivated by compulsion rather than choice, is clearly conveyed in Florence's passion. Compulsion overrules her intuitive foreboding: "ihr war zu Mut wie den armen Hexlein des Mittelalters, wenn sie ihre Seelen dem Teufel verschrieben hatten" (EMM, p. 239). This psychological analysis, however, does not simply excuse her predicament, but rather, serves as the context for a two-edged gender critique. When Fahrke chances upon Florence during the night after the uprising, which both spend at Erwin's house for safety, he finds her in a state of rapture:

Der Vollmond schien ihr ins Gesicht mit seinem flimmernden, tollmachenden Glanz. Ein schwacher Rauch stieg von den geschwärzten Mauern auf. Ihre Finger zitterten, und Schwindel umflorte ihre Augen. "Hier war's! So war's!" – Könnte sie die Erinnerung jemals aus ihrem verzauberten, unterjochten, bezwungenen Hirn und Herzen bannen, – welches Glück! Welche Erleichterung! – Und doch hätte sie lieber sterben als sie missen mögen. (EMM, p. 236)

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<sup>112</sup> Fraser Boa (ed.) *The Way of the Dream. Conversations on Jungian Dream Interpretation with Marie-Louise von Franz*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1992, p. 16.

The uncomfortable, not to say irritating effect of this depiction of surrender to grandiose fantasy and self-undermining projection is a hallmark of successful narration of excessive subjectivity – it invites incredulity and a wish to surpass or escape from this state. Ensnarement, rather than escape, however, follows when Fahrke intuitively that he has captured her imagination:

Er starrte sie unter zusammengezogenen Brauen hervor an, mißtrauisch, unsicher und doch schon ein wenig als Herr und Gebieter, als Mann das Weib, das er im Mondschein, zwei Schritte abseits von Sitte und Herkommen antrifft, von der darum die Etiketten der von der Gesellschaft aufgeklebten Rangordnung abgefallen sind, in der er nur eine des andern Geschlechts erblickt, eine zur Knechtschaft Vorherbestimmte, und trüge sie den Fürstentitel! Nichts als eine Sklavin, die den Herrn sucht, und deren Unterwerfung anzunehmen er bereit ist. (EMM, p. 238)

The reality of the situation, which Florence experiences in terms of a “Rausch” that justifies the disavowal of responsibility, is subsequently amplified in their respective reactions: Florence experiences “unsagbare Traurigkeit”, whereas Fahrke “blies [...] das Licht aus, das Florence auf dem Tisch vergessen hatte, und ging leise pfeifend [...] hinaus” (EMM, p. 239). His quiet whistling indicates both gratification and intention. This consciousness of impending ownership implies her degradation, an effect that is metaphorically rendered when he blows out the light which she had forgotten. The episode acts simultaneously as critique of patriarchal morality, and as admonition to women to become more conscious of their susceptibility to it.

Florence is not described directly in terms of her sexuality, an approach that would in any case have jeopardised a female author’s credibility.<sup>113</sup> As has been shown, it is the absence of a sense of purpose that is foregrounded as her prime situation and the cause of her disaffection. Members of the *Frauenbewegung* were motivated by their “Drang nach geistiger Auswirkung”; what this actually meant at the time can be gleaned from Lange’s comment that the “schrittweise erkämpfte Verwirklichung dieser tief

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<sup>113</sup> It will be readily apparent that in a society which pathologised female sexuality and denied female individuality, bourgeois women who took a socially critical stance perforce proceeded with caution in respect of the portrayal of sexuality. The reception of Reuter’s *Aus guter Familie* again comes to mind here – even though she was part of the rebellious and progressive circle of avant-garde writers, the “Zweideutigkeiten und Obszönitäten” on the part even of her friends almost caused her to burn the manuscript before publication. (Reuter, *Vom Kinde zum Menschen*, p. 470.)

brennenden Sehnsucht war Glück ohne gleichen, ein ganz unbezweifeltes, durch nichts zu hoch bezahlter Gewinn.”<sup>114</sup> *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, in its gender and social critique, echoes the mission of exponents of the “Bund [der] Deutsche[n] Frauenvereine” who “stellten sich [...] vor eine höchst verantwortliche geistige Arbeit: zwischen Freiheit und Verantwortlichkeit den rechten Weg zu finden.”<sup>115</sup> Notably, however, Florence falters when it comes to accepting compromise as a necessary means to an end, that is, as part of a slow process of attrition of existing, normative standards. She exclaims, “kämpfen – ich! Und für die Frauen! Die anderen! Was kümmern mich die? Was kümmert mich die Herde?” (EMM, p. 82) To her, hierarchical social structuring inevitably means the construction of a disingenuous identity. Thus she reverts to a black-and-white mentality which is susceptible to extremes – a susceptibility, however, that is due to cultural factors, rather than to nature. The portrayal of how psychopathology can ensue in an essentially healthy individual is worth evaluating from a depth-psychological perspective, according to which it applies equally to both sexes:

In its essence, Jung holds, the problem of neurosis involves [...] that the individual does not experience the meaningfulness of his existence within the context of his society. It means that the society has not given him a meaningful social role on which to build a strong Persona. Failing to have strong analogues through which to move out into society, the life energies must regress in an effort to find new symbols within the psyche.<sup>116</sup>

Depending on the severity of this situation, it can mean that

the energy movement continues to regress into the psyche, it goes further and further away from consciousness until it comes into contact with the contents of the deeper levels of the psyche. When this takes place, the adaptation that the individual has to make is not mainly to the outer world; it becomes more important for him to work out a harmony within his own psyche.<sup>117</sup>

Florence’s predicament is accurately described in this scenario. The viewpoint here outlined, however, also serves to emphasise that Nietzsche’s concept of the collective “Sumpf”, or of societies that are made up of strong, socially well-adjusted natures who are subject to stasis or regression, is perhaps better viewed as tendency than as

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<sup>114</sup> Lange, *Lebenserinnerungen*, p. 232.

<sup>115</sup> Lange, *Lebenserinnerungen*, p. 231.

<sup>116</sup> Ira Progoff, *Jung’s Psychology and its Social Meaning*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953, p. 230.

<sup>117</sup> Progoff, *Jung’s Psychology and its Social Meaning*, p. 229.



inevitability. Further, it may well be context-specific to collective situations, admittedly over millennia, which have been ordered according to patriarchal norms, such as the preoccupation with power and greatness, such as, ironically, Nietzsche also continues to espouse in essence. His observation may, additionally, most accurately apply to the modern urban situation described by Kierkegaard. *Ein moderner Märtyrer* does apply a notion of common consensus commensurate with notions of individualism to Wilhelmine society. But sexual and social inequality are here both among the “undiscutibaren Grundsätze” that rest on a “starken, auf gleichartige, charaktervolle Individuen gegründeten Gemeinwesen” which is subject to “Verdummung”.<sup>118</sup> The question arises why Fifi, along with a majority of women, do remain socially adapted – they do, by virtue of marriage and childbirth, “experience the meaningfulness of [...] existence within the context of [their] society.” The question is partially answered by the novel’s acknowledgment of the inequality of inherent potential: she is among the “minderbegünstigte Mitschwestern” who “eine Binde um die Augen trugen” (EMM, p. 91), and whose life expectations are proportionally easier to satisfy. On the other hand, the common consensus, arguably, is an inherently unstable status quo even without the dramatic action of predisposed “abartenden Naturen”<sup>119</sup> – must Fifi not sooner or later, become cognisant of disenfranchisement, at the latest when her children, in whom her identity is largely vested, grow up,<sup>120</sup> to end in a psychological dynamic depicted by Hedwig Dohm in *Werde, die du bist?*

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<sup>118</sup> Nietzsche, “Anzeichen höherer und niederer Cultur.”

<sup>119</sup> Nietzsche, “Anzeichen höherer und niederer Cultur.”

<sup>120</sup> Hedwig Dohm raises these problematics in her novella *Werde, die du bist*. (Cf. Hedwig Dohm. *Werde, die du bist*. Breslau: Schottlaender, 1894.) – Notably, this narrative also appropriates Nietzsche’s ideas. (Cf. for instance, Thomas, *Nietzsche in German Politics*, pp. 89-91.)

The observation that the “Rangordnung” is merely “aufgeklebt” is a naturalistic turn reminiscent of Emile Zola’s first experimental novel *Therese Raquin*, which deconstructs societal norms to reveal the universality and power of instinctual drives.<sup>121</sup> Social status, from this viewpoint, has only conditional validity, in contrast to sexuality, a natural drive that has existed over aeons. Yet *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, rather than emphasising biological consequentiality as a factor that operates autonomously from the social environment, observes how sexuality is fundamentally conditioned by the dominant values of the social environment. Since this environment is a patriarchal one, the consequence for women is a tendency both to idealisation, and to self-subordination. To quote Weedon:

Patriarchal constructions of woman as sex, destined only for wife and motherhood or for prostitution, ruled out the possibility of woman being a rational, creative and sexual being. Women’s internalisation of their patriarchally defined difference led to forms of masochism which looked to religion, society and nature for their guarantee and justification. The masochistic construction of femininity in Germany at the turn of the century is a repeated theme in women’s writing. It is the key dimension of women which accounts for their internalisation of repressive norms and it explains why they put up with their oppression and moreover extend it to their daughters. Men, mostly in the guise of fathers and husbands, play a crucial role in this process, but in the end it is the construction of femininity which is at issue.<sup>122</sup>

It is at an instinctual level that Florence falls prey to the repressive consequences of the social environment. Her self-subordination is readily apprehendable. When it comes to the treatment of masochism, however, *Ein moderner Märtyrer* deviates from concurrent narrative depictions.

As Weedon identifies, it is notable that the thematic complex of willing subordination and masochism is prevalent in the work of other female authors of the time who are

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<sup>121</sup> Cf. Emile Zola. *Therese Raquin*. France: Lacroix, 1867. – This novel takes as its basis the preoccupation with social respectability, which is then consistently deconstructed to arrive at sexuality and power as basic instinctual drives. These instincts are depicted as overpowering subconscious forces and the protagonists’ surrender to them leads to their relinquishing of moral restraints. As in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, this process proves unviable because self-destructive, as well as destructive of others. It is also shown as finally vested in projections, which do not correspond with reality.

<sup>122</sup> Weedon, “Of Madness and Masochism”, p. 89.

concerned with sexual inequality. Gabriele Reuter's *Aus guter Familie*, for instance, depicts its protagonist Agathe's lack of fulfilment and prospects in terms of devotion which is qualitatively abject:

Nie – nie wollte sie Raikendorf vergessen, daß er ihr den ganzen Abend die Fülle von freundlichen Hoffnungen gegeben. Ihr ganzes Leben sollte ein Dienen dafür sein. Nicht genug konnte sie sich darin thun, ihn als ihren Herrn zu erhöhen und sich zu erniedrigen.<sup>123</sup>

*Aus guter Familie* frames the theme of subordination somewhat differently than *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, because it attributes a simultaneous hatred of, and longing for, sensuality to its main protagonist Agathe, which "sows the seeds of mental illness in Agathe".<sup>124</sup> This hatred, arguably, serves in part as a reference to the previously highlighted Protestant legacy of the rejection of corporeality. Due to the foregrounding of sexuality, Reuter's narrative can in one sense be deemed more confrontational than *Ein moderner Märtyrer*. Yet the contemporaneously acknowledged female predisposition for self-denying devotion and masochism is perhaps not exhaustively analysed thereby: the unconscious legitimisation of longing for prohibited sensations via self-degrading devotion appears to be one possible consequence, rather than the only one.

Florence's submission to Fahrke's 'genuine maleness' proceeds along a pathological footing. The hurried marriage in the wake of their respective broken engagements with Erwin and with *Angestellte* Marie Winter evidences a continuation of the "Bann" which is the result of Florence's fantasy image. It persists in conflict with her instincts, which intuit reality:

Erstickend wälzte die Frage sich ihr auf die Brust: "Wie kommst du hierher? Warum kamst du?" Sie fühlte seinen Ring, kalt wie eine Schlange, an ihren vierten Finger gleiten und erschrak vor dem Amen des Mannes im schwarzen Talar. (EMM, p. 289)

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<sup>123</sup> Reuter, *Aus guter Familie*, p. 262.

<sup>124</sup> Weedon, "Of Madness and Masochism", p. 82.

Reality first makes its unavoidable presence felt during their honeymoon. Free indirect speech initially focalises Florence's experience:

Und dann der Aufbruch, die Bahnfahrt. [...] O, diese Reise! Die Hochzeitsroute ungezählter junger Paare! Wenn Illusionen Körper hätten, auf dieser Straße könnte man ihre Leichen zu Wagenladungen zusammenlesen. Die Florences liegen, modern dort mit den anderen. Eine stille, ernste Frau kehrt sie zurück. (EMM, p. 290)

The novel traces the process of doubt and defensive denial in Florence as experience forces a partial reinstatement of rationality beneath her projection:

[Florence] lernte jetzt das Schweigen. Und sie ertrug all' diese Quälereien ohne Murren, denn sie liebte, nein mehr! Sie wollte lieben, anders lieben als Gevatterin Müller oder Schulze, anders als gewöhnliche Frauen, mit ganzer Seele, bis zur Selbstvernichtung lieben! Er sollte sie mißhandeln! Er durfte es. Es war dennoch Seligkeit sein zu sein, die Puppe, das Spielzeug des Einzigen! Des Größten, des Gewaltigsten unter den Menschen. Das war er ihr, das mußte er ihr bleiben – oder, was war sie? [...] wenn jemals dieser Gott Mensch würde, – dann war sie das unseligste Weib auf Erden! (EMM, p. 308)

Whether masochism accurately describes her experience is debatable. Florence's experience does not involve the type of pleasure described by Lou Andreas-Salome:

Adine traces her own masochism back to an incident in early childhood when she saw her nanny's pleasure in being beaten by her husband. The nanny had looked at him with 'verliebter Demut'.<sup>125</sup>

Her sanctioning of Fahrke's mistreatment, rather, is a bid for continued self-determination, an attempt to maintain a pre-existing fantasy of greatness in the face of increasing odds. She also wishes to be agent rather than object: she wants to love rather than be loved and it is her own passion, rather than Fahrke's domination, that drives her commitment.

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<sup>125</sup> Andreas-Salome, quoted in: Weedon, "Of Madness and Masochism", p. 90.

While Florence's conscious will had previously been no match for the force of her unconscious desires, the actual experience of the "Übermensch" proves unbearable. Her imagination had rendered the domination-subsumation dynamic erotically charged in the context of power-driven sexuality. Yet the domination that results from Fahrke's egocentric passion is mundane; it engenders humiliation rather than the desired stake in power by alliance. In order to avoid Erwin and to regain a sense of perspective, Florence resides in Kassel (EMM, p. 287) during her engagement. However,

Fahrke's Briefe, bald voll leidenschaftlicher, beängstigender Zärtlichkeit, bald strotzend von verletzenden Anklagen, und immer gleich unberechenbar, immer gleich ungerecht, ob sie streichelten oder züchtigten, ließen sie keinen Augenblick zur Ruhe kommen. (EMM, p. 287)

During his visits "stieß [er] ihre Einkäufe um" and "bestimmte ihren Anzug bis in jede Einzelheit [...] dabei war er bis zur Lächerlichkeit geschmacklos" (EMM, p. 288). Once married, in order to control her, "hatte [er] sie nie allein gelassen, nicht einen Augenblick. Er schickte ihr beständig Menschen, die Pastorin, Dora, ihre Schwägerin, ihren Bruder. Es war Zwang, qualvoll wie das Tragen einer Kette" (EMM, p. 309). In addition to enslavement through lack of privacy – the chain motif is here transferred from labourers to Florence – disillusionment occurs also in respect of physical sexuality. The narrative changes from past to present tense to emphasise Florence's alienation:

Dann sah sie sich in Fahrke's Armen. Er küßt sie ohne Scheu vor der Heiligkeit des Ortes, vor der Schar der Zeugen. Der Wagen rasselt und stößt: sie steigen aus. (EMM, p. 289).

Sexual allusion is here sufficiently oblique to avoid any slur on the respectability of the author, yet the imagery is sufficiently vivid to imply that disillusionment occurs. One further unmistakably sexually-connoted moment occurs later, when, while Florence remains awake, "Fahrke in traumlosem Schlaf vor Behagen stöhnte" (EMM, p. 327), to

demonstrate his unconcern with his destructive impact on characters who stand in his way, or by whom he imagines himself slighted. Rather than extolling sexuality in order to critique or problematise it, however, *Ein moderner Märtyrer* embeds it within the same psychological themes that characterise Erwin as apparently effeminate. Arguably, this may be termed the crucial narratorial priority: Fahrke's dominance ultimately is fallacious because it lacks the capacity to "function feelingly." In consequence, his effect on those around him proves devastating. Aside from the sacking without notice of hundreds of families after the revolt, Florence witnesses the summary dismissal of Herr Winter after thirty-five years of service, when the aged accountant becomes Fahrke's scapegoat for refusing to greet him on account of the latter's betrayal of his daughter Marie (cf. EMM, pp. 313-18). Further, Florence is forced to face the fact that Fahrke had impregnated and abandoned the teenaged Olga during his engagement with Marie when the girl's mother comes to her door to demand funds for the infant's funeral (cf. EMM, p. 325).

Each time Fahrke vanquishes an opponent, he stands "im Hochsommer seiner Macht und Wichtigkeit" and shows himself "in strahlender Laune" (EMM, p. 320). The ultimate critique of a "Philosophie der Macht"<sup>126</sup> occurs in the context of Florence's emerging compassion, which checks her own egotism on account of the suffering her husband's behaviour engenders:

Allmählich, ganz sacht begann sie abzuwägen den Wert der Geopferten, Verdrängten, gegen den Wert dessen, der an die Stelle trat, eine gefährliche Rechenarbeit, ein tollmachendes Exempel, das nie rein aufging. Stolz hatte sie sich oft gerühmt, daß "die anderen" nicht mitzählten in ihrem Willen, weichliches Nachfühlen fremder Not niemals seine Schneide abstumpfte; und nun waren's gerade "die andern", die Besiegten über deren Leiber Fahrke's Hand sie zerrte, die ihr den ersten Funken der Empörung ins Herz gegen ihren unerbittlichen Gott. (EMM, pp. 326-8)

In a poetic reversal, it is now not an overpowering projection, but what the return to sanity entails that is "tollmachend". A sardonically realistic comparison between the

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<sup>126</sup> Alfred Kerr. *Wo liegt Berlin? Briefe aus der Reichshauptstadt*. (Edited by Günther Rühle.) Berlin: Siedler, 1999, p. 524.

expectations engendered by fantasy and the experience of reality leads to the discovery that

der Rausch verfliegt, und Ernüchterung folgt, der Blitz erlischt, und Verwüstung bleibt. [...] Sie mühte sich Fahrke's Bild zu sehen, übergewaltig, zwingend, wie in jener Aufruhrnacht. Aber neben dies Bild stellten sich jetzt andre Bilder, viele Bilder, ein endloses Gewimmel, und sie alle zeigten ihn klein. (EMM, p. 348)

The ultimate moment of disillusionment occurs in Florence's consideration of the abandoned mother and child:

Anders freilich nimmt ein Übel sich aus in vornehm philosophischer Betrachtung, anders wenn es seine Stacheln dem Philosophen ins eigene Fleisch bohrt. Und das drum und dran war so häßlich, so platt, so plump gewöhnlich! Wie sie auch kämpfte, sie konnte nicht hinweg über diese Menschlichkeit ihres Gottes. (EMM, p. 325)

It is worth comparing the psychological realism of this episode with Thomas Mann's conclusions about Nietzsche, which are here directly anticipated:

Er hat sein Leben lang den 'theoretischen Menschen' vermaledeit, aber er selbst *ist* dieser theoretische Mensch par excellence und in Reinkultur, sein Denken ist absolute Genialität, unpragmatisch zum Äußersten, bar jeder pädagogischen Verantwortung, von tiefster Politiklosigkeit; es ist in Wahrheit *ohne* Beziehung zum Leben, dem geliebten, verteidigten, über alles erhobenen, und nie hat er sich die geringste Sorge darum gemacht, wie seine Lehren sich in praktischer, politischer Wirklichkeit ausnehmen würden. Das haben auch die zehntausend Dozenten des Irrationalen nicht getan, die in seinem Schatten, über ganz Deutschland hin, wie Pilze aus dem Boden wuchsen.<sup>127</sup>

Mann elaborates on the practical consequences of Nietzsche's legacy:

Alles, was er in letzter Überreiztheit gegen Moral, Humanität, Mitleid, Christentum und für die schöne Ruchlosigkeit, den Krieg, das Böse gesagt hat, war leider geeignet, in der Schund-Ideologie des Fascismus seinen Platz zu finden, und Verirrungen wie seine 'Moral für Ärzte' mit der Vorschrift der Krankentötung und Kastrierung der Minderwertigen, seine Einprägung von der Notwendigkeit der Sklaverei, dazu manche seiner rassehygienischen Auslese-, Züchtigungs-, Ehevorschriften sind tatsächlich, wenn auch vielleicht ohne wissentliche Bezugnahme auf ihn, in die Theorie und Praxis des Nationalsozialismus übergegangen.<sup>128</sup>

When it comes to narratorial depictions of the "europäische Vorkriegszeit", Roger Hillman's distinction between introverted and extroverted authorial approaches to the nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century *Zeitroman* bear repetition in this context. Thomas Mann's approach, "in dem er das innere Bild einer Epoche [...] zu

<sup>127</sup> Mann, *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*, pp. 48-9.

<sup>128</sup> Mann, *Nietzsches Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung*, p. 40.

entwerfen versucht", is unusual: "Immermann and Spielhagen did not attempt such an inner picture in their novels, but remained at the outer level of their eras." Likewise,

H. Mann's *Im Schlaraffenland* is concerned in its satire with an outer reality and only through distorting this makes an implied negative comment of an inner reality. Fontane alone, so much admired by T. Mann, blended the inner picture of an era with one of its exterior.<sup>129</sup>

By prioritising philosophical and psychological standpoints, *Ein moderner Märtyrer* adopts an introverted approach to the depiction of Wilhelmine society. That its author felt this novel's message to be directly relevant on the eve of World War One has already been discussed. Westkirch's novel ultimately argues for a transvaluation of the most basic assumption of a patriarchally conceived social system: that responsibility, rather than power, is the only viable overriding societal value.

### The Female Predicament as Societal Indictment

Once Florence's projection is toppled, the predicament of being female in an inescapably repressive social environment is presented forcefully. Self-mockery emphasises the intensity of Florence's desolation, which this discovery gives rise to:

Vor ihren trockenen, brennenden Augen war ein Bild aufgetaucht. Das stand unverrückbar fest in schmerzender Farbenfrische, eine Erinnerung an einen Kasseler Theaterabend, eine Scene aus dem Sommernachtstraum: die Elfenkönigin Titania, die liebtestoll den Eselskopf bekränzt - - Titania, das war sie. (EMM, p. 368)

Simultaneously, the reference to Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*<sup>130</sup> functions to modify her abjection by attributing mythological, and therefore archetypal resonance to it. This is a consequential metaphoric gesture, since Titania herself is a formidable nature spirit who is punished for defying her husband Oberon, or, symbolically, the male will. The question arises,

<sup>129</sup> Roger Hillman. *Zeitroman. The Novel and Society in Germany 1830-1900*. Frankfurt/New York et.al.: Peter Lang, 1983, pp. 13-4.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. for instance, William Shakespeare. (Stanley Wells/Gary Taylor (eds.). *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, Act 4, Scene 1, 39-44.



was nun? Was weiter? – Vorwärts auf der alten Bahn? Nimmermehr! – Und doch gab es auch kein Zurück, denn nicht mit Güte noch Gewalt würde Fahrke sie frei geben. Vor ihr klaffte der Abgrund, er klaffte hinter ihr. (EMM, p. 368)

The answer, in Florence's social context, is inevitable. She drowns herself,

mit einem einzigen Strich ihr verpfushtes Dasein weglöschend wie eine mißratene Zeichnung, – unbewußt die furchtbarste Rache nehmend an ihrem Verderber. Nicht sie war gemacht durch das Leben zu sühnen. So sühnte sie durch den Tod. (EMM, p. 393)

This outcome is psychologically consequential, since her temperament, as uncontainable nature, is incapable of self-compromise in perpetual humiliation.<sup>131</sup>

The dysfunctionality of an archetypally conceived male-female reciprocity here becomes the indictment, which is partially visible in the novel's gender reversal. Florence's alignment with nature does not prevent heroic personality traits traditionally conceived of as male. She feels herself to thrive on "Sturm und Kampf" (EMM, p. 177), wants to catch "Glück, Liebe, Sieg [...] im Sprung" (EMM, p. 127) and idolises the glory of battle (EMM, p. 126). Erwin, on the other hand, is a "zarte[r], blonde[r] Mann mit [...] leise[r] Stimme" (EMM, p. 145), who succumbs to migraine under stress, and who according to Florence acquires the appearance of a "Huhn, das den Pips hat" (EMM, p. 213). According to Fahrke he is a "blonde Pagode" (EMM, p. 314) a "Schwächling" who sits in a "Weiberstube" (EMM, p. 212), and further, a "Kleine[r]" whom he intends "völlig niederzuwerfen, ihm Herrschaft und Besitz bei lebendigem Leibe abzuerben" (EMM, p. 320). As Florence is in the process of deconstructing her projections of greatness, she meets Erwin by chance:

"Ich hab' [...] viel zu tun [...] um nach dem schweren Mißerfolg meine Pläne ins Werk zu setzen." "Ihre Pläne? Was? Daran denken Sie noch?! – Für das Glück dieser undankbaren Schurken arbeiten Sie, mühen sich noch immer?" Staunend

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<sup>131</sup> Nancy Richardson notes how Böhlau's *Halbtier* expresses what self-compromise meant in practice for a woman in a domestically abusive situation in Wilhelmine society: since "social norms [...] offer women no recourse other than illness or passive aggression", the use of a "gleichgültigen, abgestorbenen Miene" is the sole outward reaction of main protagonist Isolde's mother to the behaviour of both husband and son. A notable similarity between the two novels is that Isolde finally resorts to murder (rather than to suicide) when being silenced does not constitute a viable way to live. (Böhlau, quoted in: Nancy Richardson. "Violence and the 'New Woman' at the Turn of the Century: Helene Böhlau's *Halbtier* (1899)", in: Caroline Bland/Elisa Müller-Adams (eds.). *Schwellenüberschreitungen. Politik in der Literatur von deutschsprachigen Frauen 1780-1918*. Bielefeld: Aisthesis Verlag, 2007, p. 87.

starrte sie ihn an. Aber dieser Schwächling hielt ja an seinem Willen fest, – fest wie Fahrke; nein, fester! Denn Fahrke setzte ihn durch über fremdes Weh und fremde Not hinweg, dieser setzte ihn durch gegen die Qualen und Enttäuschungen der eigenen Seele. (EMM, p. 350)

The novel appears to anticipate Bertrand Russell's view when Erwin is finally reinstated as the representative of masculinity:

[Nietzsche] has never conceived of the man who, with all the fearlessness and stubborn pride of the superman, nevertheless does not inflict pain because he has no wish to do so. Does anyone suppose that Lincoln acted as he did from fear of hell? Yet to Nietzsche Lincoln is abject, Napoleon is magnificent.<sup>132</sup>

When, instead of succumbing to Fahrke's bid at usurpation, Erwin instead gives him notice to quit, Florence experiences the reversal as her own redemption:

In ihrem einmal von Leidenschaft entzündeten Herzen starb die Liebe nicht; nur ihr Gegenstand wechselte. Aus der niedergebrannten Asche der letzten stieg wie ein Phönix strahlend in unvergänglicher Jugend die erste empor. Ja, durch Zorn, Ekel, Scham und Haß, die ihr Herz bestürmten, hallte wie ein Jubel und Siegeschrei unaufhörlich die freudige Gewißheit: Erwin Relling hatte gesiegt! – Im Kampf auf Tod und Leben hat er deinen Peiniger besiegt! Er ist der Stärkere! (EMM, p. 369)

She resurrects her erstwhile love for Erwin, which had previously been eclipsed in her perception of his slightness and effeminacy. Her proposal to Erwin that he should run away with her and to abandon his purpose "heute, jetzt gleich!" (EMM, p. 380) prompts his recognition that she remains subject to archetypal, rather than real experience:

Du liebst [...] nicht mich, nur den Gegensatz von ihm, den du hassest. Und wärest du mein, du würdest vor Sehnsucht vergehen nach einem, der anders wäre als ich. Das ist's, was dich allmächtig nach sich zieht: das ewig andre, das nie und nirgend Vorhandene. (EMM, p. 381)

While he deems this situation to be a matter of temperament in a less than consequential narratorial gesture that has him assert that "du bist also geartet, sagst du, und so ist's vielleicht dein Recht. Aber auch ich, der anders Geartete, hab' ein Recht zu sein nach meiner Art (EMM, p. 382), as has been seen, it is the combination of disposition and environment that configures her psycho-pathology. The outcome is tragic also for him; it means that there is "kein Glück mit einander, niemals! niemals! Und auch kein Glück ohne einander!" (EMM, p. 387), to constellate a perpetual lack of

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<sup>132</sup> Bertrand Russell. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: Routledge, 1991, p. 735.

*felt* meaning. In this configuration, even Fahrke is finally revealed as self-destructive – at the narrative conclusion, in amongst the workers' tribute to Erwin

trägt der Wind abgebrochene Schmerzenslaute des verlassenen Ehemanns  
herüber, der über sein zusammengestürztes Lebensglück rast an der Bahre des  
Weibes, um das auch Erwins Herz in ewiger Trauer blutet. (EMM, p. 396)

Neither Fahrke's "Egoismus" and "Riesenwille", nor Erwin's philanthropy are able alone to construct the meaning which engenders personal fulfilment. In the absence of the latter, the concept of worth is deconstructed to become either dysfunctional instinctuality, or self-denying purpose as a type of ascetic and transpersonal experience. Realised *masculine* individuality, in this configuration of gender inequality, becomes itself inaccessible. The consequence is seen through Erwin's perspective at the narrative's conclusion:

"Ich, der ich zu denen gehöre, die Freude am 'sich opfern' finden, - was klag' ich denn?" Aber es würgte ihn etwas in der Brust. Das einsame Leben gähnte ihn öde an; er zögerte, sein Kreuz wieder auf die Schultern zu laden und dachte mit Neid an den Ruheplatz unter den grünen Tannen, den sie erreicht hatte, und von dem ihn noch ein weiter Weg durch Staub und Sonne schied; ein dorniger Weg [...] Erwin Relling preßt die glühende Stirn an die Scheiben. Ein fernes Glück vorge genießend, spricht er leise vor sich hin des sterbenden Kaisers<sup>133</sup> Wort: "Plaudite, amici, comoedia finita est." (EMM, pp. 395, 398)

An alternative discourse is underlined here: meaning, at base, can only be a *felt* phenomenon, which egocentric ambition and noble intention – as variants of will – can neither define or control. Contingent on mutuality, its unavailability ultimately manifests itself in the covert longing for death that promises to be a conditioning factor of Erwin's life.

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<sup>133</sup> The allusion here is to the Roman emperor Octavius Augustus, whose sovereignty began at a young age, surrounded by enemies, and who died in AD14. He is referenced as "Meister unter den Schauspielern, unter den Herrschern" and lauded as "weise und kraftvoll" (EMM, p. 396). A further parallel between the hero of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* and the Roman emperor can be discerned from an observation attributed to Plutarch, who notes that "the Emperor Augustus 'expressed his surprise that Alexander did not regard it as a greater task to set in order the empire he had won than to win it.'" (Richard Stoneman. *The Legends of Alexander the Great*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1994, p. xiv.)

The problematics identified in Florence and her counterpoint Fifi Hadeln are supplemented by the depiction of women in the other two social classes, the proletariat and the new middle class of *Angestellten*. They serve to explore the modes of expression available to women in their respective social contexts. Olga Zieseniß and Marie Winter are the main representatives that deserve closer attention. One striking feature which Florence, Olga and Marie have in common is that they all fall prey to Fahrke on account of their susceptibility to his sexual magnetism. Thus female sexuality is thematised indirectly, as a cumulative observation, rather than one that is developed in a single protagonist. Likewise, the acknowledgement that sexuality levels social difference proceeds sufficiently circuitously not to risk authorial respectability. Female sexuality is problematised in Fahrke's awareness of his effect on women:

Nein, wachend war er kein Narr, am allerwenigsten kleinen Mädchen gegenüber, die seinem Bannkreis so unvorsichtig nahe kamen [...]. Er war am Himmel der Galanterie ein schwerfälliger Fixstern, der sich nicht gern vom Fleck rührte. Kam aber ein keck umherfahrendes Kometenweibchen, seiner Unbeweglichkeit spottend, übermütig dahergetollt und berührte nur den weit ausgedehnten Bezirk seiner Anziehungskraft, da half kein Sträuben, es mußte heran. Kein Meteorstein ist je mitleidloser von Sonne oder Mond eingeschlungen worden. Das war ein Fatum – des Meteorsteins und des Weibes. Er wäre nie auf den Gedanken gekommen, sich ein Gewissen daraus zu machen. Die närrischen Dinger! Warum hatten sie keine Flugkraft? Warum widerstanden sie nicht? Und konnten sie's nicht, was beklagten sie sich? Er fragte auch nicht danach, ob sie zu Grunde gingen. (EMM, p. 240)

The celestial metaphor here serves not only to describe a psychological process; the imagery of space also implies the narratorial distance which enables a consideration of the issue, and in accordance with which extended sensual depictions are avoided. In an adroit reversal of traditional perceptions about seduction as a danger that proceeds from women to men, which posit female desire as ensnarement and which characterise women as types varying between the *coquette* and the *femme fatale*,<sup>134</sup> it is the male

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<sup>134</sup> The intensity with which the idea of female sexuality as a vibrant, natural energy (or power which, in the cultural context means not authentic expression but the potential for domination) was resisted may be taken from Weininger's tract: "Die Koketterie ist [...] ein Mittel, den aktiven sexuellen Angriff von Seiten des

who in the above episode is in a static, or passive position, and who has a “Bannkreis” – he acts as irresistible seducer. Given Fahrke’s fixation on power, if female masochism is connoted in the image of being haplessly attracted to a devourer, it is nevertheless dismantled when free indirect speech takes over objective narration: Fahrke would only respect women if they had the power to resist him – his capacity for relationship remains limited to competition, as Florence finds when “mit ihrem Gatten kein behagliches Plaudern, kein Gedankenaustausch von Mensch zu Mensch” is possible because “sie war ihm kein Mensch; sie war ihm ein Weib” (EMM, p. 348). While Florence, Olga and Marie are equal in terms of their instinctual susceptibility, their respective environments both dictate and allow for variance in their reactions to predicaments and opportunities.

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Mannes herbeizuführen, die Intensität dieses Angriffes nach Belieben zu steigern oder abzuschwächen und seine Richtung, dem Angreifer selbst unmerkbar, dorthin zu dirigieren, wo ihn die Frau haben will.” (Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter*, p. 298.) This female manipulation proceeds in the absence of any capacity for individuality and integrity, as already highlighted. The implications for sexuality here are that “unterschiedslos [...] fühlt sich jede Frau, da das Weib nur und durchaus sexuell ist, da diese Sexualität über den ganzen Körper sich erstreckt und an einigen Punkten, physikalisch gesprochen, bloß dichter ist als an anderen, fortwährend und am ganzen Leibe, überall und immer, von was es auch sei, ausnahmslos koitiert. Das, was man gewöhnlich als Koitus bezeichnet, ist nur ein Spezialfall von höchster Intensität. Die Dirne will von allem koitiert werden – darum kokettiert sie auch, wenn sie allein ist, und selbst vor leblosen Gegenständen, vor jedem Bach, vor jedem Baum – , die Mutter wird von allen Dingen, fortwährend und am ganzen Leibe, geschwängert.” (Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter*, p. 300.) It is remarkable that in the process of such a depiction not only ‘woman’, but sexuality itself is rendered obsessive and idiotic; a kind of fanaticism is attributed to it. While Weininger elsewhere shows awareness of the “Projektionsphänomen”, according to which an individual “haßt nur, durch wen er sich unangenehm an sich selbst erinnert fühlt” (Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter*, p. 404), he is unable to recognise his own misogynistic sexual attributions either as hatred, or as projection. Compared to the coquette, the *femme fatale* is a more complex cultural phenomenon. A noteworthy portrayal appears in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (cf. Bram Stoker. *Dracula*. [Edinburgh]: Archibald Constable, 1897). The concept of the vampire can be interpreted as a symbolisation of the psychological process by which repressed instinctual energies drain energy from the conscious sphere. In this narrative, Count Dracula’s women were first devoured by him – or by the patriarchal order – they consequently symbolise femininity in a state of advanced degradation on account of this incursion. The process is depicted in the protagonist Lucy, an initially healthy and innocent girl who is preyed on and gradually succumbs. At the point of death, which is “only the beginning”, “in a sort of sleep-walking, vague, unconscious way she opened her eyes, which were now dull and hard at once, and said in a soft, voluptuous voice, such as I had never heard from her lips, ‘Arthur! Oh, my love, I am so glad you have come! Kiss me!’”, ‘kiss’ here standing for ‘draining’ and murder both of soul and body. (Bram Stoker. *Dracula*. Online version: Bram Stoker. *Dracula*. Online version: <[http://www.pagebypagebooks.com/Bram\\_Stoker/Dracula/CHAPTER\\_12\\_p13.html](http://www.pagebypagebooks.com/Bram_Stoker/Dracula/CHAPTER_12_p13.html)>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.) In *Dracula*, the *femme fatale* continues to be controlled by the Count. As a lethal twilight creature who in her turn is a devourer of men, she fascinates and compels. When Jonathan Harker first meets Dracula’s women at the castle, he notes that “all three had brilliant white teeth that shone like pearls against the ruby of their voluptuous lips. There was something about them that made me uneasy, some longing and at the same time some deadly fear. I felt in my heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss me with those red lips.” (Stoker, *Dracula*, <[http://www.pagebypagebooks.com/Bram\\_Stoker/Dracula/CHAPTER\\_3\\_p8.html](http://www.pagebypagebooks.com/Bram_Stoker/Dracula/CHAPTER_3_p8.html)>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.) The converse portrayal, of the susceptibility of women to a destructive type of male sexuality in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, is an interesting counterpoint to the phenomenon of the *femme fatale*.

Olga, as already noted, becomes pregnant by Fahrke; he abandons her since an alliance with her does not effect his material advantage. The narratorial admonition to women to attain greater self-respect and thus resist the “Anziehungskraft” (EMM, p. 240) of a domineering male therefore again ensues through the depiction of the potentially extreme differences of viewpoint which a disingenuous relationship can involve. Olga’s continued trajectory revolves around the theme of sensuality.<sup>135</sup> Helene Lange’s observations are helpful to an understanding of why its thematisation is not developed within the bourgeois sphere, at least in its unalloyed form:

Auf einem Gebiet haben [die theoretischen Grundsätze] die Bewegung am tiefsten aufgewühlt und mich selbst Jahre hindurch beschäftigt. Sie lagen an der Stelle, an der die emanzipatorisch-individualistische Tendenz der Frauenbewegung mit ihrer Richtung auf höhere soziale Verantwortung sich kreuzte: in der Frage der Ehe und Sexualethik. Die Aufnahme des ganzen Fragenkomplexes, den man gemeinhin als ‘Sittlichkeitsfrage’ bezeichnet, in das Arbeitsprogramm der Frauenbewegung war an sich einer der entschiedensten emanzipatorischen Schritte, ein schwerster und mutiger Entschluß.<sup>136</sup>

Due to traditional strictures around the “Sittlichkeitsfrage”, direct narrative treatment of sensuality inevitably involved its foregrounding at the cost of other themes, even when this was not the authorial intent, as has been seen in the reception of *Aus guter Familie*, notwithstanding its eventual positive transformative effects. Given the narrative priorities of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* as *Sozial-* and *Zeitroman*, it is not surprising that the topic is treated in its unalloyed form outside of the bourgeois sphere – what is of interest, however, is *how* it is treated. The fifteen-year-old Olga is first introduced as “ein junges Mädchen von verblüffender Schönheit” (EMM, p. 18), which, “mit seinem rotflammenden Haar [...] war das erste Schöne auf das [Erwin] in seiner Nebelheimat stieß (EMM, p. 21). The effect, his marked confusion, is noted by her gratified mother, who “lächelte verstohlen” (EMM, p. 18). The proletarian mentality is depicted as ruled

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<sup>135</sup> The term sensuality is here not used as a synonym for sexuality *per se*, but rather, in terms of its semantic proximity to hedonism.

<sup>136</sup> Lange, *Lebenserinnerungen*, p. 230. – It should be noted that “individualistisch” here specifically denotes focus on personal freedoms, rather than the complex psychological phenomenon previously referred to.

by utility, engendered by envy and by deprivation: “nicht das Schwarze unter dem Nagel gönnen einem ja die Menschen hier!” (EMM, p. 22). Frau Zieseniß routinely uses her daughter’s attractive appearance to procure advantage: “wozu hat eine Frau hübsche Kinder, wenn ihre Hübschigkeit zu nicht nutz sein soll?” (EMM, p. 71) The maternal stance, alongside a lack of education and an overemphasis on a narrow, homogeneous social sphere, results in a “schlau naïve[s] Mädchen” (EMM, p. 23) who is used to *trade* her attractive appearance for material advantage, who “tänzelte anmutig [...] zum Haus des Chefs” (EMM, p. 73) when sent to request home improvements for her mother. When Olga’s liaison with Fahrke appears to be curtailed due to his engagement with Marie Winter, Frau Zieseniß remarks, “die Mannsleut’ sind glatt wie die Aale. Wenn eine das nich klug anfängt – ” (EMM, p. 99). It is also covetousness which is attributed to Olga’s ultimate inability to resist the implacable advances of Fahrke at a local dance:

“Ich tanze nicht,” zischte Olga, und ihre Augen funkelten den Kecken an. “Ach!” Er hielt sie umschlungen und drehte sich mit ihr, daß ihr der Atem verging. Unmöglich, sich loszureißen; seine Arme hielten sie fest wie eine eiserne Falle. “Ich tanze nur mit ledigen Herrn,” wehrte sie atemlos. “Und für Sie – für Sie schickt sich das gar nicht, Herr Fahrke!” Er führte sie zu einem Tischchen. “Willst du Limonade oder Bier?” “Ich will, daß Sie mich in Ruh’ lassen.” “Kratzt Kätzchen?” Fahrke griff in die Tasche und zog ein kleines Medaillon an schwarzem Band hervor. “Artig sein, Kätzchen.” “Sie haben schlecht an mir gehandelt, Herr Fahrke”, sagte Olga mit Würde, “und jetzt handeln Sie schlecht an Ihrer Braut.” Aber während sie sprach, folgte ihr Blick begehrlieh den Bewegungen des Schmuckstücks, das Fahrke leise auf und nieder schaukeln ließ. (EMM, p. 105)

When Erwin rescues the injured girl from the brawl that ends the dance and takes her to his home to be nursed, the elegant surroundings act as “Fieber [...] in ihrem Blut” to attain luxury and ease for herself. In contrast to the “sich balgenden Männern”, Erwin’s solicitude inflames “etwas wie Wärme” (EMM, p. 113) in her, yet does redress her life experience:

Diese unbestimmte Empfindung des Wohlgefallens an dem Menschen verschwamm mit dem sehr ausgeprägten Wohlgefallen an Reichtum, Glanz und Üppigkeit in ihrer Seele zu einem gebieterischen Begehren, einer wilden, phantastischen Hoffnung, die ihr den Schlaf raubten bis zum lichten Tag. (EMM, p. 113)

Thus she entreats him to accept her as a domestic servant, while her eyes “etwas anderes [erzählten] als die Lippen, kein Sterbenswörtchen von pflichttreu wischenden Staubtüchern und ehrbar glättenden Bügeleisen” (EMM, p. 118). His response shows investment in traditional propriety:

Ihm war, als hätte er in einer köstlichen Blume unvermutet ein häßliches Insekt gefunden. Dies Kind, dies bildschöne, graziöse Geschöpf, auf dem seine Augen mit künstlerischem Wohlgefallen ruhten, so frühreif! So bewußt nichtsnutzig! So bar aller mädchenhaften Scheu! (EMM, p. 119)

Yet Olga’s subsequent progress does not quite confirm the narratorial censure that is signalled here. She does not become destitute on account of her dalliance with Fahrke; subsequent to her baby’s death, she secures a position in the city as “Amme [...] bei schwer reichen Leuten” (EMM, p. 324):

“Na, ich sage Sie! Das is ‘n Staat und ein Reichtum da! Essen – all’ das Feinste und Beste. Sie fragen ihr ordentlich, was sie haben möchte, und was die andern Mädchens sind, die müssen ihr aufwarten. Ausfahren alle Tag’ in ‘ner feinen Schimmelkutsche. Und außer für den Jungen braucht sie keinen Handschlag zu thun. Und dann sechzig Mark monatlich un alles frei. Die kann’s wohl aushalten”. (EMM, p. 334)

Olga’s recovery is summarised by her mother: “Man muß das Schlimme hinnehmen. Warum soll ich mir über das Gute nich freuen?” (EMM, p. 335) This gesture can be seen both as a refusal to attach blame to a young girl who had been predisposed to being misled, and as a concealed and unexpected ‘why not?’ attitude in respect of female sensual enjoyment. Olga, in terms of her overall progress, can be described as a modified version of a *demi-mondaine*, a distinct type of woman identified in the nineteenth century and most famously first extolled by Alexandre Dumas [fils] and subsequently by Emile Zola.<sup>137</sup> The *demi-mondaine*, as cultural phenomenon, has been documented largely in the context of – French – courtesans, such as Cora Pearl<sup>138</sup> and Virginia Oldoini,<sup>139</sup> who pursued a scandalous, hedonistic lifestyle at the periphery

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<sup>137</sup> Cf. Alexandre Dumas. *La Dame aux camélias*. Paris: Calmann-Levy, [1848]; Emile Zola. *Nana*. Paris: Charpentier, 1880.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Cora Pearl. *The Memoirs of Cora Pearl: The English Beauty of the French Empire*. New York: Stein and Day, 1983. [Pearl’s sexually explicit reminiscences were not discovered until 1983.]

<sup>139</sup> For biographical details about Oldoini, cf. “Virginia Oldoini Verasis, countess di Castiglione”, in: *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Online version: <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/98544/Virginia-Oldoini-Verasis-countess-di-Castiglione>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.



usually of courtly life, described as the *demi-monde*, or half-world.<sup>140</sup> Often impoverished and usually of aristocratic origin, their combination of beauty, social grace and sexual promiscuity ensured their procurement of luxury and ease. Due to their historical presence in Royal courts, the phenomenon of the *demi-monde* largely functioned as psychological *shadow*,<sup>141</sup> as well as aristocratic antidote to the strictures of bourgeois sexual morality in European society. It is noteworthy that both Charlotte Niese's *Licht und Schatten* and Westkirch's *Ein moderner Märtyrer* depict a similar phenomenon through proletarian characters. The narrative time of these novels, a historical moment when a burgeoning mass culture excited desire for commodity and luxury and began to make them more widely available,<sup>142</sup> is significant: the *demi-mondaine* could for the first time aspire to rise from the proletariat, as is foregrounded in Zola's *Nana*, which centralises sexuality. *Licht und Schatten* presents the phenomenon in more undiluted form in the characters Rose Valentin, as well as in Oskar Lindberg's actress lover<sup>143</sup> than does *Ein moderner Märtyrer* in Olga. Rose, to pursue sexual liberty, wealth and glamour, ultimately emigrates to America, while Olga finds a balance "zwischen Freiheit und Verantwortlichkeit"<sup>144</sup> in her semi-glamorous but still respectable position. Frau Zieseniß compares her daughter with her son:

Abgeben thun die Jungens doch nie, wie sie müßten. Mit Mädchens is das 'n ganz anderen Schnack. Unsre Olga, die läßt mich nich auf 'n Trocknen sitzen. (EMM, p. 334)

In terms of her overall trajectory in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, Olga is compensated, rather than censured for a utilitarianism that is the consequence of her formative environment.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Katie Hickman. *Courtesans: Money, Sex and Fame in the Nineteenth Century*. London: Harper, 2004, pp. 3, 24, 26.

<sup>141</sup> For previous discussions of the psychological shadow, cf. "Introduction", pp. 51-2; "Autobiography as *Heimatliteratur*", pp. 82, 90; "Charlotte Niese and *Heimatliteratur*. Variations of a Genre", pp. 136-7, footnote 11, pp. 143-44, 165; "Luise Westkirch's 'Gretchens Liebhaber': Social Critique in *Die Gartenlaube*", pp. 227, 229.

<sup>142</sup> Warren Breckman points out that "consumerism was an important dimension of the profound socio-economic change experienced by Germany in the decades between 1870 and 1914" and that by the "1890s and 1900s, enormous department stores, such as Berlins' Wertheim and Tietz-Palast, emerged as important institutions [...]. Advertising was a novel development of this period, associated as it was with the rise of mass-circulation daily newspapers." (Warren Breckman. "Disciplining Consumption: The Debate about Luxury in Wilhelmine Germany, 1890-1914", in: *Journal of Social History*. Vol 24, No. 3 (Spring 1991), p. 485.)

<sup>143</sup> For the detailed discussion of these characters, cf. "Charlotte Niese and *Heimatliteratur*. Variations of a Genre", p. 193.

<sup>144</sup> Lange, *Lebenserinnerungen*, p. 231.

Marie Winter, the daughter of the ironworks' humble and long-serving accountant, is subject to the same ambiguous position that characterises all of the firm's salaried personnel. They are privileged above the workers, but their self-identification is not yet *consciously* posed against the proletariat. Rather, their self-perception is positively derived from the bourgeoisie. They are also, however, economically dependent and vulnerable to dismissal without notice. Marie is first signalled as the potential independent woman of the future when her erstwhile function as voluntary assistant to her father, whose eyesight is failing, is challenged by Erwin:

“Die Bücher sind sorgfältig geführt, Ihre Tochter schreibt eine gute Hand, davon habe ich mich überzeugt. Es ist vielmehr mein Wunsch, daß Sie alle mechanischen Arbeiten mehr und mehr Ihrem Gehilfen übertragen, um mir um so kräftiger durch das unersetzliche und einzige Gut Ihrer fünfundfünfzigjährigen Erfahrung in meinem Amte zur Seite stehn können.” [...] “Wieviel Gehalt bezieht Fräulein Winter?” “Keins, Herr Relling! Im mindesten keins! Wie kämen wir dazu?” [...] “Das ist nicht in der Ordnung. Vom ersten November ab wird Fräulein Winter das Gehalt eines zweiten Buchhalters beziehen. Diesen Posten bekleidet sie. Seine Einkünfte kommen ihr zu.” (EMM, p. 53)

The specifics of Marie's employment is a controversial narrative gesture:

Women were unwelcome in prestigious office positions. Although they comprised almost 27 percent of routine office staff in 1907, women held only 18.5 percent of the more skilled and responsible jobs, such as bookkeeper or correspondent [...].<sup>145</sup>

The sense of the rightfulness of women in higher positions in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, however, is confirmed by the fact that only the already discredited Fahrke raises any objections against it. It occurs when he finds Marie's objection to his peremptory breaking of their engagement to pursue Florence unjustified:

Kränkt mein Anblick sie, was ich wohl glauben will, so ist's an ihr zu gehen, nicht an mir. An mir? Noch besser! Was sind Winters? Er, ein alter, verbrauchter Mann, den auf dem Werk zu behalten [...] eigentlich ein Skandal ist. Und sie, die vollen Buchhaltergehalt bezieht, ein Weib den Gehalt eines Mannes! – ein hysterisches Frauenzimmer mit Liebesgeschichten im Kopf und nur halb der Arbeitskraft von unsereinem. Und solchem Jammervolk sollte ich weichen? (EMM, p. 295)

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<sup>145</sup> Carole Elizabeth Adams. *Women Clerks in Wilhelmine Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 13.

Social prejudice is here therefore both acknowledged and defied. Marie, as a competent and intellectually astute young woman, however, does come into proximity with prejudice about intellectual and independent women. Her appearance combines contrasts and thus constructs an impression that includes a sense of incongruity:

Obgleich sie kaum 28 Jahre zählte, war [...] ihr Haar schon ergraut. Sie trug es hoch aufgesteckt mit einem Ringellöckchen an jeder Seite, eine Frisur aus der Empirezeit. Zu den ungewöhnlich blühenden Farben ihrer Wangen und Lippen nahm es sich aus wie gepudert und gab ihren energischen Zügen etwas vom Charakter eines alten Familienbildes. (EMM, p. 56)

Her grey-haired coiffure connotes a style suited to an old lady, and the overall effect connotes a relic of a bygone age, yet she appears to be possessed of robust health and vitality. Ambiguity is amplified from the perspective of a male colleague:

Wie ich vor acht Monaten hier eintrat, der Respekt, den ich gleich vor Fräulein Winter kriegte! Die reine Eisjungfrau. Brunhilde mit Hojotoho – geben Sie mir eine Tasse Thee zum Auftauen. (EMM, p. 59)

The combination of “Eisjungfrau” and Brunhilde, who is associated with passion on account of her defiance of the God Odin, her imprisonment “within a ring of fire on earth” and her suicide in response to betrayal,<sup>146</sup> again is oxymoronic. In addition, as “des alten Paares einzige, spät geborene Tochter” (EMM, p. 56), her familial position is one that emphatically implies nurture, rather than a predisposition to audacity and independence. The effect is a sense of indeterminacy, which is notable given the alignment of female independence with frigidity that was widely proliferated at that time. It was, for instance, a common trait even in what was considered to be progressive narrative fiction:

Usually the emancipated woman is cruelly satirized. In Sudermann's *Sodoms Ende* (1891) the intellectual Adah, a converted Jewess, is a frigid, ambitious, nymphomaniac monster, not unlike the Jewish distillers' wife, Frau Pimbush, of Heinrich Mann's *Im Schlaraffenland*, also a bluestocking. The emancipated wife in Max Halbe's *Mutter Erde* (1898), the daughter of a reforming professor, is devoid of all natural feeling and simply out for power over men. [...] The negative attitude to the emancipated woman characterizes nearly all male writers throughout the period.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Cf. for instance, Anthony Smart. “Brunhilde”, in: *Encyclopedia Mythica. Norse Mythology*. 2 Aug 1997. <<http://www.pantheon.org/articles/b/brunhilde.html>>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.

<sup>147</sup> Roy Pascal. *From Naturalism to Expressionism*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973, p. 209.

Given the emotional vehemence invested in such negative as well as contradictory depictions, the introduction of indeterminacy in respect of Marie's character is of interest: arguably, it is more difficult to discredit a character who is not easy to classify than it is to lampoon a highly recognisable type.

Although Marie is relatively peripheral to the overall narrative scheme, she does allow for an exploration of the new middle class as a potentially more progressive social environment in respect of positive gender developments. A brief examination of how the *Angestellten*-milieu functions in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* may help to elucidate the narrative portrayal of its potentialities. An initial point of note is the way in which the Winters household is defined by domesticity. Their home serves as meeting place for the *Beamten* of the ironworks (cf. EMM, p. 57).<sup>148</sup> It may be termed emphatically bourgeois and is, like Marie herself, framed somewhat ambivalently. Its positive aspect is communicated from the old accountant's perspective, as he returns home from work:

Gastlich strahlte ihm der erleuchtete Flur seines Hauses entgegen, als er durch den kleinen Vorgarten schritt. Seines Hauses! Ihm war, als hätte er's eben neu geschenkt bekommen. Aus der offenstehenden Stubenthür drang der Klang jugendlicher Stimmen, helles Lachen. Der Tisch war mit einem feinen Damasttuch bedeckt. Wurst, Braten, im Haus gebackener Kuchen standen darauf. Der blanke Theekessel sang leise über einer bläulichen Spiritusflamme. Hinter ihm in der behaglichen Sofaecke saß seine Alte, das Strickzeug in der Hand, ihr gutes Lächeln auf dem frischen, unter den grauen Scheiteln und Löckchen doppelt frisch erscheinenden Gesicht. (EMM, p. 55)

For Fahrke, however, even before his ambition makes him appear inhuman, it has a cloying aspect:

Im Grunde jedoch war er froh, aus dem weinumrankten Häuschen loszukommen, los von den Hunden, Vögeln und Eichhörnchen, Mariens Lieblingen, fort aus der Ordnung und dem Behagen der lavendelduftenden Schränke und leuchtend weißen Schutzdecken. Draußen atmete er auf. (EMM, p. 102)

The Winters' environment appears as almost too idyllic; it, too, connotes a bygone age in the context of the forward momentum of the narrative trajectory as a whole. In this

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<sup>148</sup> Jürgen Kocka provides an exposition of conceptual changes which accompanied the gradual terminological development from "Beamten" to "Angestellte" between 1860 and 1914. In *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, the two terms are as yet used interchangeably. (Cf. Jürgen Kocka. *Die Angestellten in der deutschen Geschichte 1850-1980*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981, pp. 116-41.) In keeping with the narrative's precedence to the concept *Angestellter*, white-collar positions are largely enumerated separately by title, rather than amalgamated. (Cf. for instance, EMM, p. 56.)

aspect, it can be seen as an expression of a social class that lacks integrity derived from historical tradition, and which seeks a bastion for positive self-identification in an idealised, Biedermeier past. Herr Winter's mental attitude evidences a similar phenomenon. It is disenfranchised; he finds the prospect of change threatening on account of his economic dependence as well as his loyal nature, in itself a contingency of his position. He is strongly resistant when Erwin first proposes change:

Wozu Veränderungen, da alles vorzüglich ging? [...] [Er] griff sich stumm an den greisen Kopf, der fünfunddreißig Jahre mit heißem Eifer nach einer Richtung hin denken gelernt hatte und nun auf einmal [...] umlernen sollte nach der andern.  
(EMM, pp. 40-2)

Yet while the vulnerable status of Winter and other *Angestellte* is compounded by colleague Fahrke's uncompromising pursuit of his own advantage, the old man is finally galvanised into an individual position and voice by him. Fahrke, himself an employee, symbolises the patriarchal propensity of the epoch from an economic, as well as psychological point of view, with the regressive effect of a progressive business model's reversion to an authoritarian one. Consequently, Winter and Marie, under Fahrke's auspices cannot prevent their own situation from becoming untenable and are forcibly removed, while younger colleagues decide to remove themselves, finding Fahrke's influence or presence intolerable (cf. EMM, pp. 141, 356). The new middle class milieu itself therefore becomes one of imperilled potential, which in principle, however, is far more flexible to social mobility, including that of women, than the strictly bourgeois sphere, which is bound by mental habits and tradition. It offers room for a Marie, as well as a Fahrke.

Despite this stratum's emphasis on domesticity, its members are sufficiently skilled to find employment elsewhere, as well as sufficiently emotionally agile to turn to international prospects if need be. As in *Licht und Schatten*, emigration to America is a viable alternative for those faced with unendurable social-economic or personal circumstances in the existing social order. Opportunity for emigration presents itself to Marie, who willingly embraces it in view of Fahrke's presence:

Als Marie sich des an ihr begangenen Verrats voll bewußt wurde, hatten ihr heißes Temperament, ihre frische Jugendkraft sich mächtig aufgebäumt. Sie haßte den Elenden! Sie wollte ihn nicht mehr mit Augen sehen. Fort! Nur weit fort! Das war ihr Verlangen. Des Vaters Bruder lebte in Kalifornien in behaglichen Wohlstand. Oft schon hatte er die Familie zu bereden gesucht, zu ihm hinüber zu kommen. Also fort jetzt! Zu ihm! Übers Weltmeer. Worauf warteten sie noch? Sollten sie sich von dem Übermütigen mit Füßen treten lassen? Sie wollte nicht bleiben. Sie nicht! Sie wollte nicht! (EMM, p. 285)

This passage contributes to her oxymoronic portrayal, which combines a tradition-bound character who is “energisch, hausmütterlich, bürgerlich” (EMM, p. 265) with intellectual inclinations that prompt a colleague to confess, “Ihnen hätte ich überhaupt nicht zugetraut, daß Sie ein Herz an sich entdecken würden” (EMM, p. 58), finally to posit a vital and passionate woman. Marie’s passion, however, is not comparable to that of Florence. A dramatic confrontation at the point of the Winters’ eviction constellates the difference:

“Was suchen Sie hier?” Es war Marie. “Ich suche nichts,” antwortete Florence sanft. Die andre sah sie verächtlich an. “s ist wahr, was Sie begehren, haben Sie sich genommen. Ich besitze nichts mehr, was Sie mir beneiden könnten.” “Sie sprechen sehr rauh mit mir, Fräulein Winter,” erwiderte Florence. “Ich will Ihnen nicht darauf erwidern, denn ich bin in Ihrer Schuld. Nur das eine glauben Sie mir, ich hatte nicht die Absicht, Sie zu berauben, zu vertreiben. Ich wußte damals nicht, – ahnte nicht – ” “Sie ahnten nicht, gnädige Frau, daß Sie siegen würden, wenn Sie Ihre Stellung und Ihren Reichtum gegen meine Armut und Niedrigkeit in die Waagschale würfen? Sie sind zu bescheiden. Diese Güter haben für Philipp Fahrke stets den Ausschlag gegeben.” “Wie dürfen Sie so von meinem Mann sprechen? Von dem Mann, den auch Sie geliebt haben?” Marie lachte. “Wirklich, ich bin so töricht gewesen, ihn eine Zeitlang zu lieben. Aber jetzt gönne ihn Ihnen. Und nicht einmal aus Rachsucht. Ich hab’ niemand gegen ihn aufgehetzt, sagen Sie ihm das; es braucht’s nicht. Was die Leute von ihm sehen, genügt. Und mich zu vertreiben, hätt’s keiner Gewalt bedurft. Nie wär ich geblieben, hätt’ ich nicht dem alten, blinden Mann den Abschied von der Heimat ersparen wollen. Das werden Sie freilich nicht begreifen. Sie sind wie er; Sie denken nur an sich. Und packt Sie ein Verlangen, so müssen Sie es befriedigen. Nicht Sitte, Scham, Recht und Pflicht hält Sie zurück!” (EMM, pp. 329-30)

Marie’s scathing critique of Florence’s self-referentiality is a summary deconstruction of a mentality prone to projections, and an avowal of life as smallrealities, dictated not least by the reciprocity of need and duty. In a sense their two outlooks are mutually exclusive; they cannot be said to have real psychological access to each others’ predicaments. Arguably, Marie’s is the more realistic position simply because it is viable. Marie’s derisive negation of her erstwhile psychological ensnarement, further, demonstrates her conceptual flexibility, in contrast to Florence’s bondage. Marie does

not, however, remove the societal indictment that Florence represents, because hers is the *extraordinary* potential that is wasted by society, ultimately because it exists in a woman. In terms of the notion of a gradual emancipative process, given the ironic configuration that Marie's expulsion ensues not long before Fahrke's own downfall, it is debatable whether the narrative views Wilhelmine society as an environment *ultimately* unfit for female progress within the emergent new middle class. Fahrke's schizoid patriarchal mind-set, after all, renders him self-destructive at a socio-economic, as well as personal level.

It is worth concluding with a few words about Marie's mother, Frau Winter. Over the course of the narrative, she is an almost, though not quite, silenced character. Her remit is the home, and her views have no direct impact except on her daughter. Yet she consistently sees more clearly, and acts with greater compassion than the protagonists who surround her. She grieves over the match between Marie and Fahrke (cf. EMM, p. 63) and contradicts Herr Winter when Fahrke abandons Marie: "Er kommt nicht zurück, Winter. Er braucht uns nicht mehr" (EMM, p. 271). Similarly, she adjures her daughter to exercise self-control:

Die Mutter, sinnig und klug nach ihrer Art, faßte das Mädchen beim Arm, führte es sachte hinaus und redete ihm zu: " [...] wir können doch nicht fort. Vater überlebt's nicht. Willst du allein gehen, den alten Mann verlassen? Soll er lebend deiner Stütze im Kontor entbehren? [...] Halt still, sag' ich, halt still! Der Bösen Regiment währt kurz. Sein wilder Ehrgeiz werden den wortbrüchigen Mann bald in sein Verderben treiben. Wir lassen den Sturm vorüberbrausen und bleiben. (EMM, p. 286)

Her counsel, aside from its accurate intuition, constitutes an instance of the capacity to "function feelingly", discussed previously – Frau Winter restrains her daughter's impetuosity by making her aware of its long-term consequences. Her own self-control becomes evident at the point of eviction:

Die Mutter ging vom einem ihrer Lieben zum andern, sprach hier Mut ein, milderte dort überquellende Bitterkeit, trug ein ruhig sicheres Wesen zur Schau von Sonnenaufgang bis Niedergang, um dann die kurzen Sommernächte hindurch, das Gesicht in die Kissen gedrückt, sich satt zu weinen. (EMM, p. 320)

Since *Ein moderner Märtyrer* is concerned with the meaning of femininity, masculinity and individuality as much as it is with social justice, it is worth noting the old woman in the context of this narrative as a whole: she is femininity as dignity, compassion and wisdom, the stature of which stands in stark contrast to its status.



## Conclusion

The aim of this study has been to contribute to a differentiated view of Wilhelmine society and its literature. To achieve this aim, I have focussed on a particular section of society, namely the new middle class of *Angestellte*, a social group which not only had a close affinity with reading and writing from its beginnings, but which also contributed significantly to what Alberto Martino refers to as the reading revolution of the late nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Martino highlights that a pressing need for “evasorische[] Lektüre” fuelled the “massenweise produzierte Belletristik” of that time<sup>2</sup> and his study bears out that the reading of the new middle class included *Schöne Literatur* and popular fiction. My study has focused on popular fiction, which had a contemporary, historical and international profile.<sup>3</sup> More specifically, I have concentrated on a particularly under-researched aspect of it: the case study texts are narratives authored by women who endeavoured to engage with their society through their writing while avoiding being branded as radical or emancipated. My overall interest therefore is a threefold one: socio-historical, literary-critical and gender issues have been explored simultaneously. Since each has presented its own difficulties of interpretation, it will be the purpose of this section, firstly, to summarise these concerns, and secondly, to present a

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<sup>1</sup> Alberto Martino. *Die deutsche Leihbibliothek. Geschichte einer literarischen Institution (1756-1914)*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1990, p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> Martino, *Die deutsche Leihbibliothek*, p. 300. – His observation serves as a useful reminder of the psychological reality of the literary market at that time: “Der Verlust der alten Bindungen und Gewißheiten, die durch die neue Umwelt erzwungene Mentalitätsänderung, die Vereinsamung und die Erfahrungsarmut riefen [...] ein akutes Bedürfnis nach psychologischen Ausgleich und kompensatorischen Erlebnissen hervor.” (Martino, *Die deutsche Leihbibliothek*, *ibid.*)

<sup>3</sup> For lending library figures indicating the prominence of authors such as Alexandre Dumas, Eugene Sue, Guy de Maupassant, Emile Zola, George Sand, Jules Verne, Victor Hugo, Charles Dickens, Walter Scott and Wilkie Collins among such German authors as, on the one hand, Wilhelm Jensen, Ludwig Ganghofer, Felix Dahn, Berthold Auerbach, Peter Rosegger and Luise Mühlbach and on the other, Wilhelm Raabe, Jean Paul and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe from 1889 onwards, cf. Martino, *Die deutsche Leihbibliothek*, pp. 410ff. An annual national survey published from 1899 to 1909 by *Das literarische Echo* reveals a similarly diverse and international profile of the most read authors of the period. A trend away from international literature, which occurred in 1902, was referred to as a striking development at the time. (Cf. Martino, *Die deutsche Leihbibliothek*, pp. 452-538, here p. 473.)

comparative, thematically organised overview of significant findings which the case study texts have yielded.

The socio-historical focus of this study has been guided by two main concerns. The first has been the need to deal with existing perspectives on Wilhelmine society. The second has been the necessity to adopt an adequately differentiated view of the capacity of literary texts to contribute insights to historical knowledge. Gesa von Essen highlights the topicality of the first concern:

In der geschichtswissenschaftlichen Forschung der letzten Jahre [läßt sich] ein deutlicher Trend zur Neubewertung des wilhelminischen Kaiserreichs beobachten, der besonders um zwei Problemkomplexe kreist: einerseits um die Frage nach der (partiellen) Modernität des Kaiserreichs und andererseits um die Frage nach den möglichen Kontinuitäten zwischen Kaiserreich, Drittem Reich und Nachkriegsdeutschland.<sup>4</sup>

The renewed interest in the question of continuity between the *Kaiserreich* and the Third Reich is inevitably informed by precedent evaluations of Heinrich Mann's satirical novel *Der Untertan*.<sup>5</sup> I have accepted Thomas Nipperdey's contention that if a prose fiction text is read too literally, the result is a cliché-prone, black-and-white image.<sup>6</sup> As

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<sup>4</sup> "Heinrich Mann, *Der Untertan* (1916)", unpublished lecture given by Dr Gesa von Essen [Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, 2008, p. 1], transcript kindly provided by Gesa von Essen.

<sup>5</sup> These evaluations have focused on whether this text should be deemed prophetic. Reinhard Alter, for instance, highlights examples of early reception, which refute the validity of this novel's comments about Wilhelmine society. (Cf. Reinhard Alter. "Heinrich Manns *Untertan*: Prüfstein für die 'Kaiserreich-Debatte'?" in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft. Neue Aspekte der reichsdeutschen Sozialgeschichte 1871-1918*. Vol. 17, No. 2 [1991], p. 370. Cf. also Renate Werner. *Heinrich Mann. Texte zu seiner Wirkungsgeschichte in Deutschland*. Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1977, pp. 100-3.) Von Essen highlights the opposite point of view by citing Hans-Ulrich Wehler, according to whom "kein Historiker das ideologisch-mentale Szenarium der wilhelminischen Zeit 'je so eindringlich beschreiben [kann], wie das Heinrich Mann im 'Untertan' getan [hat].'" Heinrich Mann himself observes that upon initial publication, reviewers were impressed by the "hellsichtig-prophetischen Qualität des Romans". (Wehler and Mann, quoted in: Von Essen, "Heinrich Mann", pp. 1, 3.) Mann, further, comments in respect of *Der Untertan* in 1946: "Beendet habe ich die Handschrift 1914, zwei Monate vor Ausbruch des Krieges – der in dem Buch nahe und unausweichlich erscheint. Auch die deutsche Niederlage. Der Faschismus gleichfalls schon: wenn man die Gestalt des 'Untertan' nachträglich betrachtet. Als ich sie aufstellte, fehlte mir von dem ungeborenen Faschismus der Begriff, und nur die Anschauung nicht." (Heinrich Mann. *Ein Zeitalter wird besichtigt*. Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1976, p. 131. [First publication: Stockholm, Neuer Verlag, 1946.]) Before and throughout the Weimar Republic, however, his writing actually and consistently evidenced undue political optimism. (Cf. for instance, Sigrid Anger. *Heinrich Mann 1871-1950. Werk und Leben in Dokumenten und Bildern: Mit unveröffentlichten Manuskripten und Briefen aus dem Nachlass*. Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1971, p. 467 and pp. 476ff. Cf. also Heinrich Mann. "Die Situation Deutschlands" and "Das Bekenntnis zum Übernationalen", in: Heinrich Mann. *Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben*. Vol. 12. Edited by Alfred Kantorowicz. Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1954, pp. 398, 509.) Mann's own estimation of the novel's visionary capacity is therefore a retrospectively construed one.

<sup>6</sup> Nipperdey, quoted in Von Essen, "Heinrich Mann", p. 1. – My study also bears out that a similar problem occurs in other, less contentious studies. Werner Deich's sociologically-based study of prose fiction texts is prone to misinterpretations where the focus is on extracting isolated pieces of socio-historical information, so that subtleties and complexities that are crucial to an understanding of the narrative are ignored or

Peter Bürger points out, valid socio-historical observations emerge from a literary work's totality,<sup>7</sup> which necessarily encompasses its complexities, including such stylistic features as deliberate emphases and omissions, and subtexts that potentially subvert even overtly advocated values. The latter occurs, for instance, in Charlotte Niese's *Licht und Schatten* in respect of its conservative ideas about gender and class. Bürger's perspective also points to the actual strength of prose fiction: that of being able potentially to depict and explore psychological realities, whether relatively accessibly or whether dealing with the "hinterlands of man's mind".<sup>8</sup> In approaching the case study texts, I have therefore been led both by an interest in an inner portrayal of the epoch<sup>9</sup> and by the belief that, to quote Manfred Hettling, "der Charakter des Kaiserreichs sich weder als Untertanengesellschaft noch als wilhelminische Hofgesellschaft hinreichend fassen läßt".<sup>10</sup> This belief is not intended to belittle the danger inherent in negative collective developments which the "public soul"<sup>11</sup> may extol. Rather, my interest has been to focus on such resistant practices as can still manifest when a "public soul"<sup>12</sup> succumbs to self-destructive illusions.

The particular interest in resistant practice, which has informed my interpretations of the case study texts throughout, has meant looking for what Volker Ullrich terms buried potentialities and moments capable of development.<sup>13</sup> I have viewed these as challenges to the dominant discourse which occur at different levels, from overt critique

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missed. (Cf. for instance, Werner Deich. *Der Angestellte im Roman. Zur Sozialgeschichte des Handlungsgehilfen um 1900*. Berlin/Cologne: Grote, 1974. Cf. also "Prose Fiction as History: Methodological Considerations", pp. 18-20.)

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Peter Bürger. "Benjamins 'rettende Kritik'. Vorüberlegungen zum Entwurf einer kritischen Hermeneutik", in: *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift. New Series*. Vol. 23 (1973), p. 204.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Carl Gustav Jung. (Baynes, Cary F. transl.). *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. London: Routledge, 1990, p. 180.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Thomas Mann, quoted in: Roger Hillman. *Zeitroman. The Novel and Society in Germany 1830-1900*. Frankfurt/New York et.al.: Peter Lang, 1983, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> Manfred Hettling. "Eine anstrengende Affäre. Die Sozialgeschichte und das Bürgertum", in: Sven Oliver Müller/Cornelius Torp (eds.). *Das deutsche Kaiserreich in der Kontroverse*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009, p. 221.

<sup>11</sup> Heinrich Mann initial subtitle for *Der Untertan* was "the story of the public soul under Wilhelm II". (Cf. Karin Verena Gunnemann. *Heinrich Mann's Novels and Essays: The Artist as Political Educator*. Rochester/New York: Camden House, 2002, p. 47.)

<sup>12</sup> The subtitle of *Der Untertan* originally was "the story of the public soul under Wilhelm II". (Cf. Karin Verena Gunnemann. *Heinrich Mann's Novels and Essays: The Artist as Political Educator*. Rochester/New York: Camden House, 2002, p. 47.)

<sup>13</sup> Volker Ullrich. "Was war das deutsche Kaiserreich?" in: [www.zeit.de/zeit-geschichte/2010/04/Das-Essay/](http://www.zeit.de/zeit-geschichte/2010/04/Das-Essay/) Accessed 4 June 2014.

of society to the kind of resistance that insidiously confronts what Carl Gustav Jung calls the “spirit of the age”,<sup>14</sup> and Michel Foucault terms “discourse”, or “discursive practices”.<sup>15</sup> Both kinds of challenge exist, for instance, in the presentation of a democratic, co-operative and organic social model, which is counterposed against a dominant elitist, capitalistic and competitive one in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*. The second kind, however, occurs still more strikingly in the same novel where the importance of feeling as a consciousness function<sup>16</sup> is intuitively pursued. Since it is applied to the male protagonist, it appears in bold relief and has the effect of subverting traditional ideas about masculinity as power. Such a constellation is in effect a transgression against the “spirit of the age, which will not let itself be trifled with.”<sup>17</sup> The effect of such a transgression is demonstrated by the way in which *Ein moderner Märtyrer* was reviewed. Firstly, Richard Weitbrecht dismisses the significance of the novel’s social message as sentimental and insufficiently realistic to satisfy male readers. Secondly, in spite of the visibility of the novel’s gender role reversal, which signals the existence of subtexts, he misses this theme altogether. Further, his comments bear out no recognition of the novel’s critical engagement with the neo-Darwinistic underpinnings of Nietzsche’s suppositions. Here, *Ein moderner Märtyrer* seems to go beyond “the limits of what could be said”,<sup>18</sup> to expose the most dominant epistemological assumptions of the era. The price of doing so, however, was critical disparagement and non-recognition.

As I have previously stated, my interest in alternative voices is not intended to belittle the dangerous potential of what I would term the arch-patriarchal trends of the *Kaiserreich*. Rather, this potential is implicitly present as that which the case study

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Carl Gustav Jung. (Cary F. Baynes transl.). *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. London: Routledge, 1990, p. 202.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. for instance, Gordon, Colin (ed.). *Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977. Michel Foucault*. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980, pp. 84ff., “Further Methodological Considerations”, pp. 46-7, and Hubert L. Dreyfus/Paul Rabinow. *Michel Foucault. Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Berkeley: Harvester Press, 1986, pp. xx, 58-9, 63-4, 66-8, 82-4.

<sup>16</sup> The use of the term consciousness function has been discussed in “Further Methodological Considerations”, p. 52.

<sup>17</sup> Jung, *Modern Man*, p. 202.

<sup>18</sup> David Jackson (ed.). *Taboos in German Literature*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996, p. 81.

authors resist in their texts. At times the dominant discourse even impinges, as happens when the integrity of “local knowledges”<sup>19</sup> is undermined in Charlotte Niese’s narratives “Allerhand Politisches” and “Meine erste Strickstunde”, which succumb to a degree of acquiescence, respectively about nationalistic and gender-based oppression. Looking for resilience and resistant practice has meant, firstly, to contribute to a balanced view of an era the negative tendencies of which have already received sustained attention. Secondly, the mistaking of partial truths for the whole truth, and the consequent inadvertent construction of stereotypes which Nipperdey identifies, itself poses a subtle danger to the interpreter. Stereotypes tend to serve what Jung terms shadow projections,<sup>20</sup> the effect of which is to label an *other*, whether this be an individual, an ethnic group or an entire society, with despicable traits. Hermann Hesse astutely expresses how such projections function when he has a character say in his novel *Demian*, “wenn wir einen Menschen hassen, so hassen wir in seinem Bild etwas, was in uns selber sitzt. Was nicht in uns selber ist, das regt uns nicht auf.”<sup>21</sup> If harmful capacities come to be identified with a specific object, the latent potentials of the human psyche, which is subject to unconscious, as well as to conscious motivations, are not under discussion and the transferable kind of questioning that tends towards deeper insights is forestalled. My focus on *Zeit*-, *Sozial* and *Gesellschaftsromane* and shorter narratives has therefore been designed to ask whether a less determinate and more differentiated portrayal of the era is possible. For the same reason, I have applied the belief that historical moments, even those that are subject to potentially dangerous collective trends, can nevertheless continue to evince open potentials, possibly solely, through their alternative voices and movements.

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<sup>19</sup> Michel Foucault. *Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. (Colin Gordon, transl.). Edited by Colin Gordon. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980, p. 85.

<sup>20</sup> This phenomenon has been discussed in detail in “Introduction”, pp. 51-2; “Autobiography as *Heimatliteratur*”, pp. 82, 90; “Charlotte Niese and *Heimatliteratur*. Variations of a Genre”, pp. 136-7, footnote 11, pp. 143-44, 165; “Luise Westkirch’s ‘Gretchens Liebhaber’: Social Critique in *Die Gartenlaube*”, pp. 227, 229; “Individuality and Gender in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*”, p. 345.

<sup>21</sup> Hermann Hesse. *Demian. Gesammelte Werke. Demian. Die Geschichte von Emil Sinclairs Jugend*. Berlin: Suhrkamp, 1955, p. 157.

The literary-critical concern about how to view popular fiction is in part answered by the approach that has been outlined. However, a few observations about the conventional notion of a qualitative schism, which divides literature into serious, or *schön* on the one hand and *trivial* on the other, and which persists even in “these postmodern, postcanonical days”,<sup>22</sup> are necessary. This notion has proved unhelpful insofar as it maintains preconceived assumptions of inferiority about both the content and form of popular fiction. While a detailed engagement with polemics that address the perceived aesthetic split, which began especially when *Trivialliteratur*-research was taken up in the 1960s and 70s<sup>23</sup> and when feminist critics demanded an “umfassende Neubewertung der Frauenliteratur”,<sup>24</sup> would have been outside the scope of this study, one consideration has had a particular impact. Jochen Schulte-Sasse’s observations elucidate how I have approached popular fiction as literary works, rather than primarily as cultural documents. He observes that mass-produced fiction “in Deutschland und Amerika [sich] nicht wesentlich unterscheidet, aber trotz der vielen ‘theories of evaluation’ hat es in Amerika kein Pendant zur Kitschtheorie gegeben.” Instead of constructing “einen abgeschlossenen, der hohen Kunst prinzipiell entgegengesetzten

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<sup>22</sup> Nicholas Saul. “Wilhelm Jensen and Wilhelm Raabe: Literary Value, Evolutionary Aesthetics, and Competition in the Marketplace”, in: Charlotte Woodford/Benedict Schofield (eds.) *The German Bestseller in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Rochester: Camden House, 2012, p. 58.

<sup>23</sup> Works on this topic are numerous and only a very few examples may here be mentioned by way of example. Cf. for instance Gerhard Schmidt Henkel. *Trivialliteratur: Aufsätze*. Berlin: Literarisches Colloquium, 1964; Jochen Schulte-Sasse. *Die Kritik an der Trivialliteratur seit der Aufklärung*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1971; Peter Nusser. *Romane für die Unterschicht*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1973; Annamaria Rucktäschel/Hans Dieter Zimmermann (eds.) *Trivialliteratur*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1976; Albert Klein and Heinz Hecker. *Trivialliteratur*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1977; Jochen Schulte-Sasse. “Toward a ‘Culture’ for the Masses: The Socio-Psychological Function of Popular Literature in Germany and the U.S., 1880-1920”, in: *New German Critique*, No. 29, Spring-Summer, 1983; Peter Nusser. *Trivialliteratur*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1991.

<sup>24</sup> Gisela Brinker-Gabler, quoted in: Ruth Whittle. *Gender, Canon and Literary History. The Changing Place of Nineteenth-Century German Women Writers (1835-1918)*. Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2013, p. 1. Cf. also Gisela Brinker-Gabler. “Die Schriftstellerin in der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft: Aspekte ihrer Rezeption von 1835 bis 1910”, in: *Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*. Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring 1976), pp. 15-28. Whittle traces the feminist debate from the 1970s up to the present: “Herminghouse (1998) went further, and was probably the first to call for a systematic investigation of the intersection between literary history, the establishment of a canon, and the loss or outright exclusion of the majority of women writers from literary histories, and hence from the canon”, while Stephanie Günther similarly calls “for an investigation of the link between process of canonisation and gender” in 2007. (Whittle, *Gender, Canon and Literary History*, p. 1.) Cf. Also, Stephanie Günther. *Weiblichkeitsentwürfe des Fin de Siècle. Berliner Autorinnen: Alice Berend, Margarete Böhme, Clara Viebig*. Bonn: Bouvier, 2007. – Jeannine Blackwell may be mentioned as contributing to the debate in the 1980s. Her position is that “it is to misunderstand the authority of women’s writings to push them into the framework of almost exclusively male movements which happen to be simultaneous (Enlightenment, Storm and Stress, Romanticism, Expressionism) and then find them wanting.” (Cf. Jeannine Blackwell. “Anonym, verschollen, trivial: Methodological Hindrances in Researching German Women’s Literature”, in: *Women in German Yearbook*, Vol. 1 (1985), p. 46.)

Bereich der Literatur", he asserts that American criticism tends to restrict itself to "isolierbare Aspekte des literarischen Versagens". Since this approach is less regimented, he questions the reasons for the German *modus operandi*:

Die andauernden Definitionsbemühungen könnten im deutschsprachigen Raum bedeutungs- und begriffsgeschichtliche oder allgemeinere geistesgeschichtliche Voraussetzungen haben, die mit den literarischen Verhältnissen selbst gar nichts oder zumindest gar nichts mehr zu tun haben; eine theorieimmanente Tradierung systematisierter literarischer Wertvorstellungen könnte den Blick für die Eigenarten und Gliederungen der Massenkultur weitgehend verstellt haben.<sup>25</sup>

His comparative analysis is of interest not only for its questioning of a "theorieimmanente Tradierung", which itself merits a conceptual-genealogical investigation. It also points to a tendency to overemphasise *definition*, or in other words, to overstress the capacity of classification to deliver definitive or authoritative results.<sup>26</sup> The validity of Schulte-Sasse's viewpoint has not been superseded by the more recent position which concedes a relativisation of aesthetic values by acknowledging boundaries between text-types to be blurred, but which nevertheless accepts the "Abgrenzung von Literatur mit Kunstanspruch gegen Unterhaltungs- aber auch gegen Sach- und Gebrauchsliteratur" because it is a practice that "im Sozialsystem Literatur tatsächlich vollzogen wird und sich auf die Wertung dieser Texte auswirken muß."<sup>27</sup> My approach has been, rather, to assert throughout that qualitative boundaries are blurred across the literary spectrum and I have adopted a heuristic, phenomenological approach to pursue this view. Hans Foltin's notion of *Unterhaltungsliteratur* as a porous middle layer between texts the content of which is profound and those which evidence serious degrees of literary failure<sup>28</sup> has been

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<sup>25</sup> Jochen Schulte-Sasse. *Die Kritik an der Trivilliteratur seit der Aufklärung*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1971, p. 18.

<sup>26</sup> Gert Vonhoff's study is an example that emphatically resists such outcomes and instead develops historically-orientated interpretive parameters about 'narrative' and 'narrating' which "keinen typologischen [...] Charakter haben sollten" and which "nicht zu systematisch, auf keinen Fall zu klassifikatorisch sein sollten, denn das würde die Sicht auf die Besonderheit der jeweils historisch ausgeprägten Relation verstellen, damit nur ablenken von dem, was gerade wegen seiner Nicht-Automatisierung, wegen seiner Besonderung die Neugierde hervorruft und so potentiell das Verstehen öffnet." (Gert Vonhoff. *Erzählgeschichte*. Münster: MV-Wissenschaft, 2007, p. 9.) – In his interest in alternative modes of interpretation, Vonhoff also implicitly highlights the problem of over-definition in traditional criticism.

<sup>27</sup> Renate von Heydebrand/Simone Winko. *Einführung in die Wertung von Literatur*. Paderborn/Munich et.al.: Schöningh, 1996, pp. 361-2.

<sup>28</sup> Hans Friedrich Foltin, quoted in: Albert Klein/Heinz Hecker. *Trivilliteratur*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1977, p. 13.

helpful in this respect. It works against overdefinition and segregation by positing the entire field of prose fiction as a heterogeneous continuum. It therefore neither seeks to dismantle the notion of qualitative variability by over-emphasising partiality, nor accepts a dichotomising tendency on the grounds that this tendency exists as an inescapable social practice. In my interpretations of the chosen texts, I have not purported objectivity or adopted an authoritative standpoint. Rather, I have endeavoured to make as explicit as possible the viewpoints and assumptions that underpin and stipulate value in the context of my own enquiry. If one theoretical preoccupation merits highlighting in this context, it is perhaps the hope to have succeeded in avoiding reductive readings, whether of popular fiction genres, or of the actual texts.

The two case study authors have been viewed as special insofar as they, as women, were automatically subject to critical relegation – a situation which Friedrich Castelle was frank enough to admit by referring to the “landläufige Leichtfertigkeit des literarischen Urteils” in respect of the work of female authors.<sup>29</sup> The patriarchal social status quo entailed not only restriction by imposed censure, but also self-censorship where dominant values were internalised – both what the authors chose as subject matter and how they presented it were affected by these strictures. A case in point is the bourgeois focalisation of the proletariat in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*. A direct comparison to Emile Zola’s procedure in his famous *Sozialroman*, *Germinal*,<sup>30</sup> for instance, would not be appropriate in this respect: his use of explicit sexual references, graphic lavatorial particulars, and narration of violence, which occur throughout his novel, provide a powerful and convincing proletarian portrayal. But Zola, socially validated as a male, heterosexual, bourgeois European, while being initially despised both in Germany and elsewhere, was able to transcend notoriety and became the head of a new literary movement.<sup>31</sup> A woman, however, could not have transcended

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Friedrich Castelle. *Charlotte Niese. Eine literarische Studie*. Leipzig: Grunow, [1914], p. 4.

<sup>30</sup> Emile Zola. *Germinal*. Paris: Charpentier, 1885.

<sup>31</sup> An overview of Zola’s reception is given by Henry Remak: “The collection of adjectives used by early German critics of Zola repeats those lavished previously and even simultaneously on his literary teachers [...]. If anything, the moral indignation seems more violent and more sustained. A dogged rigidity of not



disrepute. Positioned as principal *other* of the dominant patriarchal discourse, which identifies power with masculinity, means that notoriety could only occur in the absence of respect, as borne out by the damning medical and popular discourses in circulation. While Zola's social focus itself undoubtedly amounted to a type of confrontational resistant practice, resilience on the part of the case study authors is inevitably found in subtleties, subtextual agendas, or in the complexity that arises from what I have termed thematic compounding, which occurs in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* where the overt gender discourse is inextricably entwined with the novel's socio-economic and philosophical engagement. A particular interest therefore has been the extent to which Charlotte Niese's and Luise Westkirch's narratives can be termed resistant specifically to patriarchal discourse norms, which in late nineteenth-century Germany were epitomised in externalised and internalised expressions of militarism and authoritarianism, and, as Alfred Kerr points out, in Nietzsche's teaching as the "erste Philosophie der Machtanbetung".<sup>32</sup> Given Niese's and Westkirch's almost diametrically opposed generic approaches and styles of narration, the question whether any common ground emerges also arises. The thematically-specific comparisons which follow will focus on three main areas: firstly, on politics and nationalism, secondly, on gender and individuality, and thirdly, on spirituality and religion.

The way in which the authors deal with the political situation provides the initial focus. Niese's fictional and autobiographical narratives overall give the impression of an essentially conservatively-minded authorial temperament. The patriotism expressed in "Allerhand Politisches" is at base a defensive construction, which responds to a

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only the moral but also the aesthetic critical standards prevails. Zola's 'vulgar brutality' is held up against the 'eternal perfection' embodied in Goethe's *Iphigenie* or Schiller's *Jungfrau von Orleans* and, not surprisingly, discarded with disgust. Much of his negative criticism, it is true, parallels equally adverse French comments." After this first wave of reception, in the late 1880s, however, "Michael Georg Conrad, Karl Bleibtreu, Klaus Hermann, Wilhelm Bölsche, and Conrad Alberti, preceded by the brothers Hart [...] and Oskar Welten, followed belatedly by Arnold Holz, assure Zola's fame through such mouthpieces as *Die Gesellschaft*, the *Berliner Monatshefte*, and the *Magazin für die Literatur des In- und Auslands*." A third phase of reception occurred between "1888 and 1893, [when] under the influence of Georg Brandes, Hermann Bahr, Maximilian Harden, Julius Langbehn, and the *Freie Bühne*, the *Nation*, and the *Kunstwart*, Zola's romantic, symbolistic, and subjectivistic qualities stepped into the foreground." (Henry H. Remak. "The German Reception of French Realism", in: PMLA, Vol. 69, No. 3 (June 1954), pp. 422-3.)

<sup>32</sup> Alfred Kerr. *Wo liegt Berlin? Briefe aus der Reichshauptstadt*. Edited by Günther Rühle. Berlin: Siedler, 1999, p. 524.

longstanding conflict between Denmark and Germany. Her later reminiscences appraise the fervour she experienced during her youth:

Später habe ich oft die Beobachtung gemacht, daß die Schleswig-Holsteiner, die zwischen [18]48 und [18]64 geboren waren, viel lebhafter, viel vaterländischer empfanden als das später geborene Geschlecht. Nach siebzig kam das satte Bürgertum, und die lebhaften Gefühle hörten auf oder wurden unterdrückt.<sup>33</sup>

Her comment that nationalistic sentiment decreased after 1870 is itself of interest. It refers not only to the kind of equanimity that can result from military and material success. Niese elsewhere relates the local experience of the Prussian administration: "sie regierten einfach darauf los und sägten ab, was ihnen zum Absägen reif schien."<sup>34</sup> Her ambivalence is intensified by the fact that her grandfather was dismissed when Prussian aristocratic assessors were placed in positions of authority in Schleswig-Holstein.<sup>35</sup> Niese's retrospective evaluation of how Prussia was locally received shows that her patriotism was largely concerned with independence:

Die Holsteiner hatten die zweideutige Haltung Preußens in den achtundvierziger Kriegsjahren nicht vergessen, während die Schleswiger durch die schlechte Behandlung der Dänen mürbe geworden waren.<sup>36</sup>

Local inhabitants' experience was emotive; they are shown to have been unaware of wider perspectives that impinged on their aims. The limitation of Niese's conservative-patriotic stance, which in the twentieth century even became subject to a degree of radicalisation,<sup>37</sup> is apparent from her lack of recognition of the psychological

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<sup>33</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Von gestern und vorgestern*. Leipzig: Grunow, [1924], p. 32.

<sup>34</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 135.

<sup>35</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, pp. 135-6.

<sup>36</sup> Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 124.

<sup>37</sup> Niese's old-age reminiscences, published in 1924, are of interest here because they provide context in respect of her later development. While a detailed discussion of her development in the twentieth century is beyond the present remit, a few brief observations may be valuable. Her later political reflections are of historical and psychological interest, strands that are worth differentiating. In *Von gestern und vorgestern*, a distinct note of bitterness appears, which reflects a sense of disadvantage and unfair treatment of Germany – and also specifically of Germans – at an international level. These reflections evidence their historicity, for instance by demonstrating residual colonial assumptions – she mentions the "ungeheure[n] Besitz" which "schon damals den Deutschen in Nordamerika gehörte", to distinguish herself as part of the –pan-European – generation that did not yet problematise the invasion and dispossession of indigenous peoples. She also succumbs, albeit briefly in the context of these memoirs, to a sense of nationalism orientated in international competition, which dispenses with the integrative gist that makes her story-telling remarkable. This nationalism is of psychological, as well as historical interest: the former because the persistent sense of disadvantage, experienced in early childhood in the context of the Danish administration of Schleswig, which adversely affected her family's fortunes, and which she may unconsciously have blamed for her abandonment by her family on the island at the age of twelve (cf. Charlotte Niese. *Von Gestern und Vorgestern*. Leipzig: Grunow, [1924], pp. 106), clearly resurfaces in the specificity of the issues she highlights. Thus she records impressions of being treated as "Bürger zweiter

significance of nationalism. The conflicts between Danish and German children show their internalisation of the concurrent pan-European preoccupation with superiority, otherness, and greatness. Thus the children of Danish officials are threatened with “schweren Strafen [...] wenn wir einmal an die Reihe kämen” (AP, p. 224), which sentiment, however, is followed by an innate sense of wrong (cf. AP, p. 225). Niese’s deepest ambivalence lies here, and it is not resolved: “was wir eigentlich mit unserem Dänenhaß wollten, weiß ich nicht mehr” (AP, p. 223). It seems not to have been possible for her to disentangle independence from superiority, an emotional equation that relates to a worldview the underlying assumption of which is that competition is an unquestionable life-fact. The cognition that nationalistic self-definition is ultimately dependent on the construction of an *other* who is not only different but also inferior does not manifest in her texts. Arguably, Niese’s real impact does not emerge from narrative constructions that rely on social analysis. It is, rather, at an intuitive level that her significance emerges. It will be remembered that this study posits intuition and feeling processes as functions that are equal to analytical thinking. Niese’s reduction of power politics to the psychological reality of the rulers, for instance, which occurs at the beginning of “Allerhand Politisches”, and which strips the machinations of both the German and Danish aristocracy of their glamour, constitutes a significant intuitive insight. Fallibility, contingency and immaturity here appear in place of authority. As a result, an effortless *felt* sense emerges of a political situation that is actually driven by

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Klasse” during her prolonged stays with her brother Heinrich in New York, where “die amerikanischen Familien englischer oder holländischer Abstammung [...] sich viel vornehmer vor[kamen] als die ‘Dutchmen’, wie sie die Deutschen im allgemeinen nannten. Auch die Spanier und Italiener waren immer noch besser als die fleißigsten und erfolgreichsten deutschen Bürger der Vereinigten Staaten.” (Cf. Charlotte Niese. *Von Gestern und Vorgestern*. Leipzig: Grunow, [1924], pp. 106, 200-4, here p. 202.) – It may be added that at a still deeper psychological level, a persisting sense of disadvantage can also be seen to reflect unresolved – internalised and hence unconscious – gender issues, such as, for instance the constellation of inferiority in the familial sphere by the neglect of her education in contrast to her brothers, despite being their intellectual equal (cf. Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, pp. 94-101, 164-8). The sense of offence at negative nationalistically-biased projections that constellate inferiority is in this passage strongly and even darkly refuted. Language is among the issues highlighted as sensitive – she blames German immigrants for not maintaining their indigenous tongue. Further, she observes that “es [...] auch Deutsche gegeben [hat], die, trotz ihrer Abstammung, sich amerikanischer als die Amerikaner selbst gebärdeten” (Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 202), to mirror her negative evaluation of German Schleswig residents who demonstrated an overt and exaggerated Danish patriotism and at times acted as informers for the Danish government. (Cf. Charlotte Niese. *Aus dänischer Zeit. Bilder und Skizzen*. Leipzig: Grunow, 1903, pp. 223-4, 233-4.) The historical interest here emerges from the fact that these observations point to a degree of radicalisation that took place in response to WWI and its aftermath, such as the peace treaty, widespread poverty (cf. Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, p. 204) and subsequent global economic crisis, which she would have been witnessing at the time of writing these memoirs.

the psychological need of the rulers. This depiction bears out what I would term resilient narration, which differs subtly from that which is more accurately described as resistant. Intuition is again strongly to the fore in Niese's foreshadowing in 1914 of the scale and impact of the First World War in *Das Lagerkind*.<sup>38</sup> This narrative presents the Thirty Years War as an apparently distant historical event to depict a brutal and interminable international conflict in which there can be no winners. Solely counting the human cost, *Das Lagerkind* resolutely deconstructs militaristically-derived notions of greatness by depicting the reality of war as it is experienced by ordinary people, as also by brutalised soldiers. By presenting an interminable series of atrocities throughout the narrative trajectory, notions such as honour, dignity and purpose are deconstructed. The idea of victory likewise, is refuted through an avoidance of partiality towards any one particular antagonist.

Westkirch, in respect of the political situation as elsewhere, provides a counterpoint of approach and temperament to Niese. She characteristically challenges underlying social and psychological phenomena which she views as responsible for injustice and fallacy, and nationalism is among these. In *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, the perspective remains neutral in respect of the army, which arrives fortuitously too late to quell the workers' uprising by force. Being superfluous, the soldiers and officers require accommodation for the night (cf. EMM, pp. 228-230). Their requirements are fleetingly acknowledged and their appearance remains purely functional and peripheral. Later in the novel, the depiction of the military song *Die Wacht am Rhein* (EMM, p. 394) is used to emphasise the transience of even intense emotional states in a subtle move to undermine the solemnity of nationalistic fervour. A less obvious resistant move occurs in the depiction of protagonist Erwin's non-involvement in the collective passion of the workers because both their elation and fury are volatile potentials (cf. EMM, p. 389),

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<sup>38</sup> The impending conflict was generally assumed to be brief on all sides. For a concise discussion of this expectation in Germany, cf. for instance, Volker Ullrich, *Die nervöse Großmacht 1871-1918. Aufstieg und Untergang des deutschen Kaiserreichs*. Frankfurt: Fischer, 2007, p. 408; Golo Mann. (Marian Jackson, transl.). *A History of Germany since 1789*. London: Pimlico, 1996, p. 294; Mary Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 152.

the root of which is their lack of individualised consciousness and undifferentiated need for personal dignity (cf. EMM, p. 396). This moment also calls to mind Niese's observation of a temporary mob mentality on the island of Fehmarn after the Prussians subdue the Danish population in "Allerhand Politisches", and of her brother's refusal to get involved, which has the effect of quelling the mob's destructive momentum (cf. AP, p. 232). In these episodes, Niese and Westkirch touch on a profound psychological phenomenon that has been termed the "unconscious infection of groups".<sup>39</sup> The antidote, in both cases, is a kind of individualised consciousness which remains immune to psychic infection. The pacifistic stance of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* is finally revealed in Erwin's assertion that military intervention needs at all costs to be avoided because, as well as being physically destructive, it has far-reaching psychological consequences: "Kugeln reißen Löcher, nicht bloß in die Körper" (EMM, p. 203). Here, however, Westkirch's thematic compounding is at its most intense. To achieve an overall evaluation of the political commentary of this novel, it is necessary next to consider the import of gender, since gender and social progress function inseparably throughout the novel.

Erwin utters his profound statement not as a stalwart pacifist, but as an apparent weakling who succumbs to a migraine at a moment of crisis. Having been portrayed somewhat androgynously up to this point – he is pale, of slight build, soft-hearted and patient, nervous, idealistic and unpractical (cf. EMM, pp. 28, 44, 127, 160, 192) – at the moment of the workers' uprising, he is unable to act due to his indisposition. He comments to Florence, compress on his forehead, "man hat mich hier zur Ruhe geschickt" (EMM, p. 213). His compassion therefore appears to be accompanied by

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. Ira Progoff. *Jung's Psychology and its Social Meaning*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953, pp. 201-8, here 205. – For further discussions of the phenomenon of psychic infection, cf. also Carl Gustav Jung. (R.F.C. Hull, transl.). *The Undiscovered Self*. New York: Signet, 2006, pp. 4, 25-6 [first publication New York: The American Library, 1957]; Marie-Louise von Franz. "The Process of Individuation", in: Carl Gustav Jung (ed.). *Man and His Symbols*. London: Picador, 1978, esp. pp. 171-85. Cf. also, "Allerhand Politisches: The Ambivalent Narrator", pp. 80-1 and "The Antagonistic Relationship Between Religion and Psychological Realism", pp. 133, 135-6. (An equivalent concept was formulated by Melanie Klein, who refers to "projective identification" rather than to psychic infection. Cf. for instance, "Projective Identification", in: *Furthering the psychoanalytic theory and technique of Melanie Klein*. <<http://www.melanie-klein-trust.org.uk/projective-identification>>. Accessed 17 June 2014.)

“gemeine, feige Furcht” (EMM, p. 213), to effect an overtly anti-heroic portrayal. This depiction, which signals deliberate challenge to a traditional male-gender taboo, was topical. Michael Hau observes that at the turn of century,

changing gender relations, as well as the feminist activism of some middle-class women, were seen by male contemporaries as threats to the traditional division of labour between the sexes. For regular physicians and life reformers alike, this raised the spectre of masculinized women and feminized men, and they responded by propagating ‘natural’ norms for the sexes.<sup>40</sup>

The gender role reversal in respect of Erwin, therefore, can be seen as a provocative form of resistance. It indicates that the novel pursues an active subtextual agenda in respect of gender roles and alludes to the deeper significance of the novel’s title.

The warrior-like Florence turns from Erwin in disgust when she witnesses his malaise and becomes attracted to Fahrke, whose greatness ultimately rests in his willingness to use deadly force against those who oppose him (EMM, pp. 211-2). Militarism – the backbone of nationalistic aspirations – and gender inequality are here constellated as inseparable. *Ein moderner Märtyrer* challenges not only male, but also established female gender roles. Florence’s warrior-like temperament itself has a specific historical resonance – as Andrea Süchting-Hänger points out, while stories about fighting women associated with “romantisierte Befreiungskriege” had once been “außerordentlich populär”, these images had been edited out by the turn of century. The “vaterländische Frauenverein” commented that “‘heute würde in ähnlichen Fällen [...] die Arbeit der Frau in Werken der Barmherzigkeit und Nächstenliebe zu suchen sein.’”<sup>41</sup> The reversal of traditional gender characteristics between Erwin and Florence can therefore be seen as a sufficient irritant to point to the actual narrative agenda.

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<sup>40</sup> Michael Hau. “Gender and Aesthetic Norms in Popular Hygienic Culture in Germany from 1900 to 1914”, in: *The Society for the Social History of Medicine*. Vol. 12, No. 2 (1999), p. 273.

<sup>41</sup> Andrea Süchting-Hänger. “‘Gleichgroße mut’ge Helferinnen’ in der weiblichen Gegenwart: Der Vaterländische Frauenverein und die Politisierung konservativer Frauen 1890-1914”, in: Ute Planert. *Nation, Politik und Geschlecht. Frauenbewegungen und Nationalismus in der Moderne*. Frankfurt: Campe, 2000, p. 140. Cf. also Whittle, *Gender, Canon and Literary History*, pp. 103-4. – *Ein moderner Märtyrer* can be seen as engaging with late nineteenth-century rigidified “Geschlechtergrenzen” through the pathos that attends Florence’s ideals. As Andrea Süchting-Hänger points out, while stories about fighting women associated with “romantisierte Befreiungskriege” had once been “außerordentlich populär”, these images had been edited out by the turn of century. The “vaterländische Frauenverein” commented early in the twentieth century: “‘heute würde in ähnlichen Fällen [...] die Arbeit der Frau in Werken der Barmherzigkeit und Nächstenliebe zu suchen sein.’”

Pathos attends Florence's ideals as she is barred from expressing the meaning of her existence, a situation that is the outcome of patriarchal social norms. Yet her death also makes clear that advancement and power are futile concepts where *self-realisation* is missing. Neither the attainment of dominance that is Fahrke's character function, nor Erwin's revised masculinity, which equates power with service, results in self-sufficiency. According to Jung, meaning is experienced only via feeling, which, as consciousness function, is both inimical and equal to reason. It is this function that is intuited as impaired in the novel in spite of its strong presence in Erwin's motivations. Rather, it is depicted as neglected and diminished in a – normative – collective consciousness which is fatefully invested in power and competition, which are assumed to be virtues. Thus in Erwin, who as a bourgeois, propertied male is in principle validated by society, feeling manifests at times as localised *otherness*, such as when his frailty and apparent cowardice thwarts expectations that power should manifest as dominance. Ultimately, however, it appears as the active resistance of an outsider. In Florence, however, whose status as a woman is derivative and whose scope for action is severely limited, feeling is imaged as wild, untameable nature: solely by withdrawing into her own deeper psychic recesses can she access her authenticity.<sup>42</sup> The outcome of this inequality is shown to be negative reciprocity: self-realisation, in the sense of fulfilment, is ultimately not just impossible for Florence, but also for Fahrke and Erwin. This inner portrayal of the era is the social indictment which *Ein moderner Märtyrer* poses. The capacity for transformation of Wilhelmine society is put in question when Florence is finally lost, not redeemed.

The alignment of the gender and society in *Ein moderner Märtyrer* reflects a specific genealogy of thought. A social philosopher, the previously alluded-to French thinker

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<sup>42</sup> Marie-Louise von Franz points out that this type of withdrawal is well-recognised in psychoanalytic practice: "if the development of consciousness is disturbed in its normal unfolding, children frequently retire from outer or inner difficulties into an inner 'fortress'". Marie-Louise von Franz, "The Process of Individuation", p. 169.

Charles Fourier, who according to Erich Edler had the “breiteste Wirkung” on the *Sozialroman*, made the connection explicit:

Social progress and changes of period are brought about by virtue of the progress of women toward liberty, and social retrogression occurs as a result of a diminution in the liberty of women. Other events influence these political changes; but there is no cause which produces social progress or decline as rapidly as a change in the condition of women.<sup>43</sup>

Fourier is likely to have inspired John Stuart Mills, who voices a strikingly similar sentiment. Helene Lange notes its significance for the *Frauenbewegung*:

Der Grundgedanke, daß die gesetzliche Unterordnung des einen Geschlecht durch das andere nicht nur an und für sich ein Unrecht, sondern auch eines der wesentlichen Hindernisse für den Aufstieg der Menschheit sei, daß an die Stelle dieses Prinzips das der wirtschaftlichen, rechtlichen und politischen Gleichberechtigung gesetzt werden müsse, war an sich so einleuchtend wie die Forderung, daß alle Bildungsgänge und Berufe, die bis dahin einseitig den Männern vorbehalten waren, auch den Frauen geöffnet werden müßten.<sup>44</sup>

Arguably, Westkirch's gender role reversal does specifically reflect a female voice: although marginalised, *Ein moderner Märtyrer* constructs a deep analysis of both the motivation and cost of patriarchal assumptions about power. Westkirch, unlike Niese, does derive her strength as an author from analytical processes, which come to bear in her complex narratives. On the other hand, the fluidity of narration suffers when feeling import is sought in extended metaphor and analogy, rather than in the immediacy of shifting, internalised perspectives (cf. EMM, pp. 35, 161, 233, 284).

In terms of gender, Niese, by contrast, focuses on intimate and familial portrayals to achieve critique which, if more tentative, is nevertheless highly effective, partly due to the immediacy achieved by her skilful handling of shifting perspectives. In *Licht und Schatten*, the theme of the perpetuation of positions retardant to women's interests by women themselves (which also occurs in *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, in the portrayal of Fifi

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<sup>43</sup> Charles Fourier, quoted in: Jonathan Beecher. “Women's Rights and Women's Liberation in Charles Fourier's Early Writings”, in: J. C. Davis/Miguel Angel Ramiro Avilés (eds.). *Utopian Moments: Reading Utopian Texts*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012, p. 92. (Original source: Charles Fourier. “Théorie des quatre mouvements et des destinées générales”, in: *Oeuvres complètes des Charles Fourier*. 12 vols. Paris: Anthropos, 1966-8, pp. 130-3.) – Interestingly, Charles Fourier is also credited with coining the term “feminism”. (Cf. for instance Michael Vlach. “Feminism”, in: *Theological Studies*. <http://theologicalstudies.org/resource-library/philosophy-dictionary/121-feminism>. Accessed 12 Dec 2013.) Cf. also *Oeuvres complètes de Charles Fourier*. Paris: Anthropos, 1966, pp. 130–3.

<sup>44</sup> Helene Lange. *Lebenserinnerungen*. Berlin: Herbig, 1930, p. 111.



Hadeln), is foregrounded in scenes between the Doktorin and Valeska (cf. LS, p. 143), as also in the Doktorin's opposition to the idea of her gifted granddaughter Ilse studying (cf. LS, p. 47-8). A comparison of the two authors in this respect shows Westkirch's approach to be highly critical, and Niese's to be preservative. The latter's gender critique is valuable in the illustration in *Licht und Schatten* that the dignity, as well as degradation, of both genders is ultimately derived from the nature of their mutual relationship. Given the non-recognition of this idea by high-profile male critics who assumed that a domination-subjugation dynamic reflects 'natural' biological and psychological facts, this perspective can be termed specifically female. The potentially disastrous effects of bourgeois fathers' domination of their daughters' lives, such as Thomas Mann was to explore in *Buddenbrooks*<sup>45</sup> five years after the publication of *Licht und Schatten*, are acknowledged as social reality in Lindberg senior's fury at Alida's rejection of his son. He demands that she marry the son irrespective of his promiscuity and their defective mutual relationship (cf. LS, pp. 90-1, 238) – a narrative moment that also highlights Wilhelmine sexual double standards succinctly. This scenario does not configure the central narrative situation, however, because its opposite is foregrounded: Julius Bardenfleth's relationship to his daughter constellates the dignity of both, while *Angestellter* Adrian Schläger, similarly, reflects the reciprocity of self-respect and respect for his 'beloved other' – Alida and he are depicted as equals in terms of stature. Niese paradoxically avoids *and* reflects the feminist stance taken by writers like Helene Böhlau, who explores the psychological consequences of a woman's subjection to the continuous pressure of mortification, inflicted by a domineering husband in *Halbtier*. "Sie hatte sich selbst so ganz verloren, daß sie an sich nichts mehr zu schützen und zu wahren fand. Es war da nichts Heiliges mehr".<sup>46</sup> By contrast, Alida's personal integrity is – in naturalistic fashion – emphasised as both the result of heredity (she is the child of her father's first marriage, by a woman alluded to as compassionate and intelligent [cf. LS, pp. 36, 384]) and of the environmental

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<sup>45</sup> Thomas Mann. *Buddenbrooks: Verfall einer Familie*. Frankfurt: Fischer, 1900.

<sup>46</sup> Helene Böhlau. *Halbtier*. Berlin/Vienna: Ullstein & Co, [1899], p. 37.

effect of a father who does not abuse her, whether habitually or by relegating her rights for the sake of business interests. A focus on positive potential, arguably, offers a valuable supplement to the stark observations of Westkirch, Böhlau, Reuter or Dohm. As William James observed in respect of his own receptivity as a reader: “it doesn’t profit me to read Jeremiads against evil – the example of a little good has more effect.”<sup>47</sup>

A final point of comparison is the treatment of spirituality and religion by the two authors. Both refute the ateleological stance which attended nineteenth-century popular fiction that took its cue from a positivistic epistemology.<sup>48</sup> Their respective approaches, however, are again at variance. Westkirch censures conventional religious attitudes in both “Gretchens Liebhaber” and *Ein moderner Märtyrer* on account of their rigidity and propensity to adopt black-and-white values as certainties. Frau Meermann, in “Gretchens Liebhaber”, in this respect is the equivalent of Pastor Mahrenholz – the certainties of both are progressively revealed as fallacious and self-interested. In keeping with the larger scale of *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, the portrayal of Mahrenholz is the more finely honed. Although he is an official representative of an unspecified, ascetically moderate Protestant denomination, his religious preoccupations are likened to “Süßigkeiten” which are “eingebildet” (EMM, p. 376). However, the critique which is levelled at religiosity does not proceed in an unqualified manner. On the one hand, it is presented as an attitude characterised by an avoidance of the discourse complexity of the time. On the other, while Mahrenholz is described satirically, his portrayal overall is ambiguous: he is concerned with convenience and personal advantage yet his garb also indicates distance from social finery; he is half-asleep compared to Erwin’s reflective consciousness, yet also sufficiently other-worldly to connote a substantive educational status. He ultimately is fallible in an accessible sense, a “behagliche[r]

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<sup>47</sup> William James, quoted in: Fritz Stern. *The Politics of Cultural Despair: a Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology*. Berkeley/London: University of California Press, p. 1974, p. xiv.

<sup>48</sup> Nicholas Saul discusses one such example in detail. (Cf. Nicholas Saul, “Wilhelm Jensen and Wilhelm Raabe: Literary Value, Evolutionary Aesthetics, and Competition in the Marketplace” pp. 58-73.)

Mann, der sein lebenlang, wie die Sonnenblume zur Sonne, sein blühendes Antlitz emporgewandt hatte zu den [...] Machthabern dieser Zeit" (EMM, p. 281). He does not display a laudable attitude, but one that in its self-preservative orientation is socially recognisable and remains understandable. The novel overall constellates a pensive reservation of judgement in respect of spirituality, which is distinguished from religiosity. Mahrenholz's affinity with dogma is deconstructed; spirituality *per se* is not. Since he remains human, rather than becoming simply absurd, the portrayal also achieves the figurative placement of a character at the threshold of an emergent new era, the deepest values of which are not yet certain.

By comparison, Niese does not make a similar terminological distinction. *Gottes Wege*, and to a lesser extent, *Licht und Schatten*, advocate doctrinal messages that are concerned with personal responsibility, tolerance and forgiveness. The shepherd Eichborn, whose very vocation is biblically-connoted, in one sense yields diminishing returns – initially strikingly individualistic in the face of common prejudice, he ultimately develops into an all but exemplary preacher. Yet given the time of publication, the prioritisation of the three highlighted values is pertinent – they can justifiably be said to have been *dangerously* lacking in turn-of-the-century German society. It is also worth remembering that the historical reception and stature of a narrative is not easy to assess in retrospect. Writing in 1903, Otto Heller refers to female authors whose prose fiction is valuable because it is "geistvoll" in the sense that it strengthens the "idealistischen Triebe aller Menschen ohne Unterschied des Geschlechts".<sup>49</sup> He distinguishes this type of writing from texts that are either trivial or radical.<sup>50</sup> In respect of the confrontational feminist writing of that time, Heller observes that it could have counterproductive results:

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<sup>49</sup> Otto Heller. "Die deutsche Schriftstellerin von gestern und heute", in: *Pädagogische Monatshefte*, Vol. 4, No. 8/9, 1903, p. 257.

<sup>50</sup> Heller, "Die deutsche Schriftstellerin", pp. 252f.

Die fanatische Fraktion der Frauenrechtlerinnen [stiess] die öffentliche Sympathie ab, und man blieb infolgedessen in weitesten Kreisen blind gegen die Berechtigung der Bewegung.<sup>51</sup>

His comment can be interpreted as an exercise in control, but it is not fully explained as such. It also describes a social and psychological reality and highlights the way in which Niese's writing functioned: it contributed to the shifting perceptions of that time by ultimately affirming positive values, rather than by emphasising negative ones. Thus it had an important, complementary role insofar as her criticism, modified by humour or placed alongside affirmative observations, was likely to be accepted. Additionally, even though the contemporary reader may shy away from Niese's incorporation of doctrine, this actually proceeds to ambivalent effect. In *Licht und Schatten*, for instance, the piety of Tine Hauberg on the one hand gives rise to an impression of authorial conservatism and religious advocacy. On the other hand, Tine is also a gritty, ethically motivated character who invariably responds to the need of the moment, rather than to self-interested desires. To view such a characterisation as compromised realism would itself be – positivistically – tendential. Karl Kaufhold poses the pertinent question:

Man kann ein solches Welt- und Menschenbild als wirklichkeitsfremd ansehen – und muß sich dann fragen lassen, wie wirklichkeitsnahe, zum Beispiel, der homo oeconomicus [...] ist oder was die Alternative zum Optimismus sei: 'homo homini lupus' als Konsequenz der Gesellschaftsanalyse?<sup>52</sup>

The depth-psychological viewpoint, which my study embraces, goes still further. Jung points out that

Whereas the man of today can easily think about and understand all the 'truths' dished out to him by the State, his understanding of religion is made considerably more difficult owing to the lack of explanations. [...] If, despite this, he has still not discarded all his religious convictions, this is because the religious impulse rests on an instinctive basis and is therefore a specifically human function. You can take away a man's gods, but only to give him others in return. The leaders of the mass State cannot avoid being deified, and wherever crudities of this kind have not yet been put over by force, obsessive factors arise in their stead, charged with demonic energy – for instance, money, work, political influence, and so forth.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Heller, "Die deutsche Schriftstellerin", pp. 253.

<sup>52</sup> Karl Heinrich Kaufhold. "Gustav Schmoller (1838-1917) als Historiker, Wirtschafts- Und Sozialpolitiker und Nationalökonom", in: *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Vol. 75, 2 (1988), p. 229.

<sup>53</sup> Jung, *The Undiscovered Self*, p. 63.

The meaning of state here is synonymous with “dominant discourse”<sup>54</sup> and Jung’s observation about the existence of an irrepressible religious impulse in the psyche posits secularism not as progress, but as an illusion characterised by compensatory behaviours. Applied as an interpretive parameter, this view means, for instance, reading Niese’s critique of the “rising tide of materialism”,<sup>55</sup> which is a central theme throughout *Licht und Schatten*, not as nostalgia, but as an act of spiritual resistance, albeit a despairing one.<sup>56</sup> With regard to spirituality, as with the other themes, Niese operates most effectively as the intuitive story-teller who constellates sub-texts that convey complex psychological negotiations, which tend to have an integrative gist. Further, she constructs a sense of contingency and relatedness which is intrinsically, rather than polemically, counterposed to a mechanistic worldview.

The case study texts, despite fundamental differences of authorial approach, demonstrate several notable similarities. Both authors present social critique by identifying individualism and individuality as distinct, antithetical concepts, where individualism manifests as a type of personal consciousness with a heightened sense of rights, ambition or desires, which lacks both depth of perception and a sense of ethical responsibility. Niese and Westkirch show this kind of consciousness to be dependent on the dominant discourse and on public consensus,<sup>57</sup> and thereby refute the notion that it represents an actually individualised state of being. By contrast, they present genuine individuality as a state of consciousness essentially disidentified from dominant collective values because it is capable of feeling<sup>58</sup> as well as of emotion, and thus is motivated by ethical responsibility and by intrinsic, rather than utilitarian value. Both authors highlight how a sense of ethical responsibility engenders behaviours and

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<sup>54</sup> Cf. Donovan, *European Local-Color Literature*, p. xxi.

<sup>55</sup> Charlotte Niese. *Von gestern und vorgestern*. Leipzig: Grunow, [1924], pp. 13-4.

<sup>56</sup> Niese comments in her autobiography, “es ist eine Welle des Materialismus über unser armes Volk niedergegangen, die auch die geistigen Arbeiter, die Studenten, die unsere Hoffnung sind, zu ertränken droht. Wer alt ist, fleht darum, daß die Wasser sich wieder verlaufen mögen. Aber er wird es nicht mehr erleben.” (Niese, *Von gestern und vorgestern*, pp. 13-4.)

<sup>57</sup> For the detailed discussion of individualism as a major cultural principle and the role of the public in its development, cf. “Individuality and Individualism as Counterpoints: *Ein moderner Märtyrer* and the Historical Debate”, pp. 288-91.

<sup>58</sup> For the discussion of Jung’s view of feeling as consciousness function, cf. “Alternative Discourse and the Critical Attribution of Triviality”, pp. 285-7.

practices that run counter to harmful collective norms. Further, Westkirch and Niese both published narratives with a resolute anti-war message on the eve of World War One. Espousal of gender emancipation and resistance to an increasingly dominant ateleological epistemological standpoint are also shared features. By applying depth-psychological perspectives to this study, I have asserted that an atheist standpoint is as impossible to prove as the assertion of religious belief. A teleological orientation in the narratives, therefore, has not been taken as outmoded, which would merely have echoed the contemporary dominant discourse. On the other hand, I have viewed a patriarchally functioning religiosity, which depends on black-and-white values and constructs certainties on this basis, as an aspect of a dominant discourse that has historically been of paramount importance, though was in process of being superseded by the late nineteenth century. Where this type of religiosity surfaces, however, I have not concluded that the narrative loses all conceptual or literary value in consequence. For example, *Gottes Wege* is a well-handled crime story, as well as of cultural interest. The tension between authorial resilience, seen in the text's psychological realism, and authorial adaptivity, seen in the centralisation of doctrine, is of particular interest in this respect.

In Niese's texts, resistant practice manifests primarily as an inner resilience, rather than as the outcome of an analytical attitude. Her intuitive insights outshine any disquisition of abstract ideals, whether overtly religious or bourgeois, both of which can be too conflicted to stand up to close scrutiny. But intuitive insights should not be underestimated. For instance, Niese's constellation of a type of social relatedness that has the capacity to mitigate traumatic manifestations like ostracism and taboo, and which also achieves conflict resolution at a local level, is an example of what Foucault refers to as a marginalised, "differential knowledge".<sup>59</sup> As such, it continues to have psychological relevance. Her formative experiences in a rural, Lutheran-Protestant island community appear to have engendered an emotionally resilient mentality –

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<sup>59</sup> Cf. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, p. 82.

articulable also as emotional intelligence – which is able to incorporate opposites. Social situations in which the psychological shadow remains integrated appear, for instance, in “Um die Weihnachtszeit”, in *Gottes Wege*, and to a lesser extent, in *Licht und Schatten*. A further significant aspect of Niese’s writing as resistant practice is the survival, if only as a remnant, of an animistic consciousness. It is configured in local attitudes to the supernatural, such as the ghost of the well in “Großvaters Schreiber”, and expressed in her later observation of schoolchildren returning home. She addresses them silently, “Ihr Armen! Wir waren lange nicht so klug; unsre Bücher waren lange nicht so schön; und wir hatten es dennoch viel, viel besser!” (GS, p. 93). Niese here implicitly acknowledges the “homogenizing institutions” which, as “normalizing disciplines [...] rooted in Cartesian Enlightenment rationalism” had gained “hegemony in the nineteenth-century Western world.”<sup>60</sup>

Resistant practice, in Westkirch’s critical approach, is achieved partly through the complexity achieved by the compounding of thematic material. It allows her fundamentally subversive treatment of gender to appear as a mere adjunct to the story of the workers and their reformist employer. Westkirch’s engagement with Nietzschean tenets also resists the black-and-white tendencies of his late nineteenth-century reception. The superman is tested and dismissed as unviable, while individuality, which takes on the form of martyrdom,<sup>61</sup> is accepted in reinterpreted form: co-operation, rather than competition, becomes the principle that underpins social progress. Perhaps the most deeply resistant move of *Ein moderner Märtyrer* is the affirmation of intrinsic value in respect of Erwin’s philanthropic vision:

Es hat zu allen Zeiten Thoren gegeben, die es nicht lassen konnten, ihre Hand ins Feuer zu legen, die zu ihren Versuchen zurückkehrten mit verbissener Hartnäckigkeit, jeder schlimmen Erfahrung zum Hohn. Es pflegt ihnen nicht besonders gut zu gehen. Wie ein gefährlicher Bergpfad gezeichnet ist mit Kreuzen, zum Gedächtnis der darauf abgestürzten armen Wanderer, so zeichnet durch die

<sup>60</sup> Josephine Donovan. *European Local-Color Literature. National Tales, Dorfgeschichten, Romans Champêtres*. New York: Continuum, 2010, p. xii.

<sup>61</sup> Nietzsche posits the individualised consciousness as a martyr. (Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche. “Die Moral des freiwilligen Leidens”, in: Friedrich Nietzsche. *Morgenröthe: Gedanken über die moralischen Vorurtheile*. First edition: Chemnitz: Schmeitzner, 1881, p. 23.)

Weltgeschichte eine breite Straße von Marterpfählen und Scheiterhaufen den Weg, den diese wunderlichen Heiligen nahmen, den Weg, auf dem manchmal, nach Jahrhunderten, die von ihnen verfochtene Idee ihren Siegeszug hielt in die eroberte Welt, – manchmal auch nicht. Sie aber thaten, was sie nicht lassen konnten. Von diesen seltsamen Käuzen bin ich einer. (EMM, p. 350-1)

The affirmation of visionary idealism as farsighted, rather than as quixotic or utopian is categorical: rather than naïve, Erwin is ahead of his time. A double narrative is constructed here, since this passage also effects an emphatic nod at the novel's potentially dismissive readership. Erwin's value ultimately is not contingent on approbation – in keeping with the Nietzschean motto, the individualist operates in accordance with intrinsic value, rather than depending on collective approval. An idea may come to fruition after centuries, or maybe not even then, yet integrity demands its pursuit – common consensus here ceases to be the arbiter of value.

My study's re-evaluation of a set of Wilhelmine popular fiction texts – the 'reading fodder' of the new middle class in particular – bears witness to a far more heterogeneous literary market than is often supposed to have existed. Through the case study texts, the controversial genre *Heimatliteratur* and supposedly trivial *Sozialroman* have both been shown to include resistant narratives that contributed to society not only by identifying and criticising fallacy and injustice, but also by astutely observing underlying psychological patterns and epistemological assumptions. The cautious and preservative orientation which the case study authors adopted as non-radical bourgeois women did not prevent them from engaging in subtly formulated observations that concealed thorough-going critique. In view of an exploration of a significant number of other popular narratives as well as the case study texts themselves, this study also points to a pluralistic situation in a literary sense, which dichotomising aesthetic yardsticks would not do justice to. The available "evasorische Lektüre",<sup>62</sup> therefore, did not simply supply the imagination of a susceptible new middle class with on the one hand, ideologically suspect ideas, and on the other, with trivial fantasies. This is not to imply that these factors did not also play a role in Wilhelmine

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<sup>62</sup> Martino, *Leihbibliothek*, p. 300.



popular fiction. But in the light of the diversity that existed in this literary market, the import of negative societal trends needs to be evaluated with caution. Hermann Hesse, who like Heinrich Mann was a first-hand observer of both the *Kaiserreich* and Weimar society, was far less optimistic, and arguably, more realistic about Weimar society than Mann.<sup>63</sup> Yet Hesse differentiates the tendencies he witnessed in the 1920s from the ideological fallacies of the *Kaiserreich*. Focusing on anti-Semitism, he observes that decisive developments were taking place in 1922:

Eine kleine Schrift *Verrat am Deutschtum* von Wilhelm Michel gibt Anlaß, auch einmal ein Wort über eine der häßlichsten und törichsten Formen jungdeutschen Nationalismus zu sagen, über die blödsinnige pathologische Judenfresserei der Hakenkreuzbarden und ihrer zahlreichen, namentlich studentischen Anhänger. Es gab früher einen Anti-semitismus, er war bieder und dumm, wie solche "Anti"bewegungen eben zu sein pflegen, und schadete nicht viel. Heute gibt es eine Art von Judenfresserei unter der deutschen, übel mißleiteten Jugend, welche sehr viel schadet, weil sie diese Jugend hindert, die Welt zu sehen wie sie ist, und weil sie den Hang, für alle Mißstände einen Teufel zu finden, der daran schuld sein muß, verhängnisvoll unterstützt."<sup>64</sup>

His observation clearly points to disastrous psychological changes that were taking place after, rather than before, the First World War, and crucially, Hesse identifies that the motivation, scope and pathological import of "anti" movements that occur at different times are not necessarily identical. Westkirch's "Gretchens Liebhaber" and *Ein moderner Märtyrer*, and Niese's *Gottes Wege* and *Das Lagerkind* all testify to a societal tendency to create scapegoats in a localised sense, which could still be criticised. The kind of pervasive and malignant situation to which Hesse refers does not appear in these narratives. In respect of the accusation that nostalgic, sentimental or trivial fantasies feature in Wilhelmine popular fiction, Kristin Belgum is also correct when she argues that the juxtaposition of old and new models of identification in *Die Gartenlaube*

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<sup>63</sup> Bernd Sucher gives an overview of Hesse's articles and poems, which are strongly critical of, as well as pessimistic about, collective trends he was observing, both in the 1920s and 1930s. (Cf. Bernd Sucher. *Suchers Leidenschaften. Hermann Hesse. Eine Einführung in Leben und Werk*. Audiobook. Berlin: Argon, 2007.)

<sup>64</sup> Hesse, quoted in: Bernd Sucher, *Hermann Hesse*. [Originally published in *Vivos voco*, a journal founded by Hesse and Richard Woltereck in 1919 to disseminate resistant social and political voices.] – Wilhelm Michel's essay, which Hesse refers to, issues scathing observations about developments in early Weimar society. (Cf. Wilhelm Michel. *Verrat am Deutschtum. Eine Streitschrift zur Judenfrage*. Hannover/Leipzig: Paul Steegemann, 1922.)

was a genuine necessity around the turn of the century.<sup>65</sup> She points out that it helped to pace and mediate the profound psychological adjustments that were being demanded of individuals in this rapidly changing society. This mediation occurred not only in respect of visual images, but also of literary texts: conceptually unchallenging, entertaining material facilitates psychological respite through an imaginative sojourn into a relatively unconscious state. Individual need tends to determine its perusal and this material does not merit denigration from this viewpoint. At the same time, the revaluation of values can be said to have proceeded from a unique perspective in the case of those female authors who, while writing popular fiction, ultimately expressed their connection with, and concern for, the tensions and deep issues of their time.

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<sup>65</sup> Cf. Kirsten Belgum. *Popularizing the Nation: Audience, Representation and the Production of Identity in Die Gartenlaube, 1853-1900*. Lincoln/London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998, p. 171.

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